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THE purpose of that study of military history so strongly enjoined by the great Napoleon and other successful leaders in war is strictly utilitarian. The soldier studies a campaign to ascertain what effects are produced by certain causes, and to trace to their causes certain effects which are recorded to have been produced in the theatre of war, or on a battlefield; sometimes he goes a step further, and adopting as premises the phenomena which have actually exhibited themselves, he reasons out what would happen in situations of a somewhat different character. Military history, like all history, constantly repeats itself; the same or almost the same situations recur in all campaigns; so the soldier who, from study, has learned what incidents occur in war, knows what to expect when he takes part in war; and the more numerous the imaginary situations he has framed and worked out for himself, the less chance is there of his being taken by surprise and found unprepared when the unexpected happens. And if a knowledge

of war as it is is so incumbent on the combatant officers in whose hands lie to so great an extent the fate and the lives of those under their command, of transcendent importance is a full and thorough knowledge of military history, with its campaigns and its battles, to those supreme military authorities on whom the nation or the Government relies for preparing the army for war, and for directing its military strength rightly and to the best advantage when war breaks out. Obviously it is to the more recent campaigns that both the soldier who studies for his own personal benefit and the military authorities who desire to obtain information for wider aims must principally devote their attention. For civilisation in her progress works great changes on the surface of the globe, improving means of intercommunication and transport, or introducing means before unknown, creating new towns and villages, depriving old ones of their importance, or causing them to grow and increase in importance, and converting desert areas into tracts of cultivation; so that both the movements of armies and the method of their movements in a particular theatre of war at a given time in history may, a few years later, have to be completely modified, and the theatre of war may even become unsuitable as the scene of a campaign; whilst the leading of the different arms on the battlefield, and their relative importance as instruments in the hands of the commander, are constantly changing owing to the unceasing improvement of the arms in use; and even a position impregnable to-day may mean defeat and destruction to the army that holds it in the near future. There is no doubt that Alexander, Hannibal, and Cæsar, in old times, Frederick the Great, Marlborough, Napoleon, the Archduke Charles, and Wellington, in less remote times, teach us in their campaigns some lessons of great value even for to-day; but the number of the lessons applicable to the present are but few; in fact, it seems hardly too much to say that, as affording practical lessons suited to to-day, on war in all its branches, the value of campaigns diminishes in a geometrical ratio as they recede from the present towards antiquity.

But although it is, in the first instance, the most recent campaign, and then the others in inverse chronological order, that must be submitted for investigation, we are at once encountered in that investigation by the difficulty that whilst of the old campaigns, which are the less valuable, we can learn much, yet of the most recent, by far the more valuable, we can learn but little. This difficulty, which seems almost

paradoxical, can be fully realised only by those few students of war who have made a special detailed study of any most recent campaign; and the existence of the difficulty will probably seem incredible to the vast mass of readers of to-day, who, having read one or more of the many accounts already published of the South African war, believe that at all events that is a war the history of which they have mastered. To derive lessons or to draw deductions from a campaign will, however, be admitted to be impossible unless there be in existence a narrative of the campaign; and unless this narrative be accurate, and also complete, both lessons and deductions may be false teaching and erroneous. And yet it is a notorious fact that, beyond giving general features, the histories of campaigns, drawn up immediately after their close, have for their characteristics inaccuracy of statement or incompleteness of the record, or perhaps both. And only a little reflection is needed to show that this must necessarily be the case.

The only witnesses in a position to furnish the accounts of the incidents of a campaign or a battle are the soldiers who have been the actors in the strife, and of these some are for ever silent, being numbered among those who fell in the fight. Commenting on a company advance both hopeless and useless, and involving a sad waste of life, in one of the battles of 1870, the historian wrote: 'What was the motive 'that led the brave Burgdorff to undertake this isolated 'attack lies buried with him in his grave'; and in war there are a legion of brave Burgdorffs of all ranks. And besides this there are other reasons in abundance.

'If a battle were a sum in arithmetic,' writes Gizycki—'and it is too often described as such—in which the only point was to move bodies of troops like pieces in a game of chess, then, no doubt, a faithful account might be given. But a battle is no more a sum in arithmetic than life is—it is a drama in which every individual plays the part of a hero struggling with fate, risking his life and limb, fighting for the life to which he is tied by a thousand bonds; a drama in which in every individual an internal spiritual process takes place, a struggle to overcome the strongest of human impulses—that of self-preservation; and all this takes place amid bodily exertions in the course of a perpetual struggle with the unexpected, and in a region of uncertainty, where, at every step, all kinds of difficulties have to be overcome. Accordingly every act—and every act is here one of responsibility—is accomplished under the most difficult circumstances; then, when it is over, the officer sits down to write his report. The ground on which he has fought he probably never saw before, and while he saw it his whole attention was concentrated on the enemy

opposed to him, so that much to which his attention was not directly called escaped his notice; thus the names of the places through which he has passed he will probably only learn afterwards; the time at which he fought he perhaps will not know, as he did not fight with his watch in his hand. Moreover, time had a quite abnormal value, so that it is hard afterwards to define, minutes having become hours and hours minutes. Accordingly he makes a picture which, considering all these circumstances, can only be an approximation to the truth. Then comes his dear self, with all its little peculiarities. The consciousness of the danger he has passed makes him exaggerate what he has done; the desire to bring his regiment and himself into prominence makes him exaggerate a great deal; the consciousness of the mistakes he has made causes him to pass over in silence, or even to misrepresent, many things. . . . These are the reports as they are written. They must be collected, and must then be worked together into a whole. This is a herculean task, for no two reports agree; and after they have all been read the student is in greater darkness than before, when he only had a general idea of the action. At last, after long research, he succeeds in ascertaining something which perhaps approaches the truth, and sets to work to write it down; and now new hindrances appear. At one point he does not like to represent the bare truth, because A. or B. will be compromised by it; at another he fancies the superior has made a mistake, and he hesitates to describe this as it presents itself to him; or, perhaps, it concerns some otherwise honourable character, whom he loves and respects, and whose repute he would not willingly diminish. Sometimes he is anxious to bring to recognition, as far as he can, some brilliant service, and this leads him to exaggerate. Such are works on military history; even the best of them cannot be free from these faults. . . .'

And then, referring to the German official account of the Franco-German War, compiled under the supervision of the experienced Von Moltke, he says most truly:—

'We must be able to read between the lines. The History produced by our General Staff, the best that has been written of the last war, and therefore, the most valuable of all for study, requires to be read between the lines seeing that criticisms of persons are always expressed in it with finest tact, while the historical truth, as far as it can be ascertained, is always there.'

And most reticent the Germans have been as regards that war. A striking instance of reticence is shown in their official treatment of the events of September 2 and 3, 1870, when three commanders—General Von Tümpling with the 6th Army Corps, Lieut.-General Von Rheinbaben and the Duke William of Mecklenburg-Schwerin with the 5th and 6th Cavalry Divisions—all three of whom had been expressly charged with the duty of preventing hostile troops returning to Paris, allowed General Vinoy with one

division of the French 13th Army Corps to pass through the outposts, slip through their fingers, and regain Paris, where the division and its commander formed the nucleus of the defence. In the official account published soon after the war, the incident reads as something quite natural and not out of the common. Not until twenty-eight years afterwards did the German Staff give to the world the full history, showing the crass blunders and mistakes committed by all ranks, from General Von Tümpling down to a cavalry trooper. And so it must be with the Official Histories of all campaigns published whilst the chief actors in them are still playing their parts on the military stage. The compilers of these histories may be trusted to tell the truth, and nothing but the truth; but to tell the whole truth would not only lead to endless recriminations, but would be fatal to the discipline of the Army. The Official History of the South African War, said to be now in course of compilation, cannot possibly be an exception to the rule. 'Le jeu ne vaudrait pas la chandelle.'

And when we come to essay the task of tracing effects to their causes, and attributing to causes their effects, we soon realise the almost unfathomable depth of the well in which the truth lies out of sight. A single effect in war is rarely due to a single cause only, but to several causes, and only by careful searching, and perhaps after many years, do we succeed in obtaining even a fair proportion of these. And as the causes originate with one of the armies engaged, and the effects are produced in the other, it is not until we have obtained from both sides their respective versions of any incident, and have carefully compared them, that we can arrive at even an approximation to the real facts. But, since politics, political differences, and national rivalries, will not stay their course until soldiers shall have threshed out the best means of dealing with the settlement of these differences by appeal to arms, soldiers can do no more at first than select, from the most trustworthy reports on the most recent war, the most important and the least controverted matters, and regard them as affording some general indications of the directions in which strategy and tactics are developing, and consequently, of the probable modifications in training, armament, equipment, and organisation, desirable in the immediate future. For the deduction of sound inferences from the data available much careful consideration and thought, and much interchange of views, opinions, and personal experiences, all requiring

time, are necessary; whilst the conclusions, eventually accepted, will have to be applied with great care, great caution. It is here that is so conspicuous the difference between the popular interpretation of the narrative of a war and its interpretation by an expert. The 'man in the street,' as the designation runs, forms his opinions from first impressions only, and jumping forthwith to conclusions, demands at once sweeping and radical alterations and changes, imagining them to be 'reforms'; the expert hardens himself before all things against the influence of first impressions, and he suspends his judgement until he has before him a fair amount of well-established facts on which to form one. Most notably has this been the case with the 'Lessons from the South African War.'

Our totally unexpected reverses in South Africa, and the equally unexpected successes of our opponents, caused not a few, in the excitement of the moment, to entertain the idea that 1899 marked the introduction of one of those epochs of the conduct of war, in which new methods of strategy and tactics completely supplant those of even the most recent past. The year 1899 found in their minds its prototype in 1806, the British Army corresponding to the stiff old-fashioned Prussian Army which was destroyed at Jena; and the Boers to the mobile army that Napoleon employed for its destruction. Cooler judgement recognises that the South African campaign has afforded on the modifications necessitated in tactics by the introduction of smokeless powder, long-range fire, and the magazine rifle, practical object-lessons for all wars; but it regards the conditions of the campaign as so abnormal that for other lessons of the past on the art of war the campaigns affording them are the same as before 1899.

But assuming that the experts are in practical agreement as to the direction indicated for the development of the art of war by some recent campaign, there arises the difficult question of the extent of the development and the mode of applying it to any particular army, for all armies possess the special characteristics of the nations, and these differ so widely from each other that a military system which is excellent for one may be totally unsuitable for another. Moreover, an army may have to carry on war against different enemies in different localities, and may find itself therefore compelled to adopt a different system of war against each. But even if a certain development be accepted, armies cannot in a few weeks or months change

their habits, beliefs, lines of action, and conduct; time is required for unlearning as well as for learning; armies are essentially conservative; new ideas filter but slowly into the mass. So that whilst the study of a recent war may have an immediate effect on the views and opinions of the individual student, it is only the most conspicuous and least controverted lessons of a recent war—and this comes but to little—that will influence an army generally in the immediate future; and so it follows that the so-called ‘Lessons of a War’ seem as a rule to be seed sown on a barren soil.

To this there is one marked exception, the Franco-German War of 1870–71, for the lessons that this war was regarded as furnishing met at once with ready acceptance. Immediately on its conclusion all European nations set to work to remodel their armies and their system of war on the German system. The German organisation, conduct of staff work, decentralisation of command and responsibility, artillery tactics, training in peace time, the free use of independence and initiative by the leaders in low as well as in high rank—all these important matters were seized on as exemplars, and in the hurry of the moment there were dogmatists who did not hesitate to lay their finger on some one of these subjects and assert that to it, and it alone, was due the superiority of the Germans over their opponents in the field. But in war, success alone is no sure test of the real value of any particular line of conduct or of action; sound leading may fail, but its soundness is not impaired thereby; unsound leading may succeed, yet it may be desirable to treat it in future as more honoured in the breach than in the observance.

In drawing lessons from a war we must, in order to come to a right judgement, hear, as already indicated, both sides of each case that comes before us, and up to the present time our conclusions and deductions from the war of 1870–71 have been based mainly on *ex parte* evidence—namely, that furnished from the German side. The German writers have apparently had every wish to do justice to their opponents; but they could often only guess the motives and reasons for their actions. The voluminous *Enquête Parlementaire*, the *Procès Bazaine*, *Lehaucourt*, *Chanzy*, *Gambetta*, the somewhat hysterically minded *Dick de Lonlay*, and a host of others, have given us a certain amount of insight into the French conduct of the war; but into all of their writings, more or less, necessarily entered personal or

political influences, and they were put before the world at times when passions might obscure the facts or lead to the misrepresentation of them. Of really reliable information from the French side we have hitherto had but little. We therefore welcome the appearance of the first instalment of the 'History of the Franco-German War,' just published, and compiled by the French War Office, as a valuable aid to the further gain of lessons from that war. The History covers the period from 1866 to the day of the first defeat of the French—August 4, the battle of Wissemburg.

And it is the more welcome on account of the impartial and judicial tone adopted in the treatment of the subject by the compilers of the History. France can now afford to reveal fully the causes of her overthrow, and to put forward those causes as warnings to the present generation of her children, for the chief actors in the tragedy have passed away from the scene; military revelations, now that the Republic is firmly established, cannot be turned to political purposes; and with the reforms in her system of defence completed, she is secure from invasion by her former foe.

Doubtless much of the information here given has already been published in works which have appeared in France and on the Continent from time to time in the last thirty years, but to most English readers even this will be new. It is purposed, therefore, in this article to extract from the French History, information on those matters which, from their importance, chiefly influenced the course of the war; and also, where the opportunity offers, to draw from the History such lessons as may be applicable to ourselves. But before dealing with this matter it seems desirable and necessary to say that although the war of 1870-71 does afford lessons still valuable for to-day, and from its yet unexplored depths, the later period, there will be forthcoming many more, the monopoly of attention and study that has been bestowed on it has acted to a certain extent prejudicially to the training and preparation of our own army for war. It is not that attention and study were not necessary, but the fact that the war has had a monopoly of attention and study, and on this matter we shall dwell at some little length as a caution for the future. It is not difficult to account for the monopoly of study possessed by this particular war. There is an attraction little short of enthralling in the resistless onward march of the invaders, victory succeeding victory with unprecedented rapidity; and when the curtain falls at Sedan, at the end of

the first act of the tragedy, the closing scene is in the highest degree dramatic—the head of an Imperial dynasty laying down his sword and being led into captivity with 200,000 men, the remnant of the Imperial army in the field.

And, moreover, when studied in detail, the war gave from the German side lessons new, and to a great extent original, on the important matters already mentioned. There was also another incentive to the study of this war. The battle-fields lay close to this country, and to them access was easy and at small cost; so year after year since 1870 there has been a steady and constant stream of British military pilgrims to them, many of the pilgrims being students at our Military Educational Institutions, ‘personally conducted’ by a professor or instructor, but very many of them voluntary students; and among the latter the most notable was a band of nine, headed by the then Adjutant-General, Viscount Wolseley, and including five other generals and three Staff officers, personally conducted by an ex-professor of the Staff College. It must also be borne in mind that the teachers of military history in this country are but few, very few, in number. To them, not unnaturally, for seven years after the war that war was all in all. Their lecture-room was not only indoors: it was also on the scenes of the strife itself. But after the Franco-German war there came, in 1877-78, the Russo-Turkish war. And how have these instructors utilised this campaign? What has the present generation of soldiers, the officers fighting in South Africa, learnt from them with regard to the lessons this war offered? Literally nothing. Not that its teaching was altogether neglected, for the present Sir George Clarke, then a captain of the Royal Engineers, contributed to the ‘Occasional Papers of the Royal Engineers’ ‘Institute,’ in 1880, a volume of valuable teaching, ‘Plevna.’ Another officer of the corps, Colonel Lonsdale Hale, then a professor at the Staff College, included it in his course of instruction. But attention to this war soon died out; and why? Were there no lessons to be gained from it? Most assuredly there were, and among them six of special importance, which, if they had been driven home into the minds of our generals and our regimental officers, would, twenty-one years later in South Africa, have gone far to keep us from committing blunders and mistakes, and would have saved lives and lives.

These lessons were—

(1) The value of long-range rifle fire used against an attacking force.

- (2) The value of entrenchments in the defence.
- (3) The hopelessness of a pure frontal attack against an entrenched position.
- (4) The little use of artillery fire against a well-entrenched defence.
- (5) The necessity for utilising, to the utmost, cover in advancing against an enemy armed with long-ranging breechloading rifles.
- (6) The probable need for the use of entrenchments in the attack.

For a time these matters specially attracted the thoughts and attention of military men. And in an article, 'The Military Power of Russia,' which appeared in the number of this Review for January 1878, all but one are brought forward. As regards infantry advancing under fire, there is a description of the Russian soldier almost literally applicable to our own soldiers in South Africa:—

'The Russian soldier is brave to a fault, but more than any other soldier he requires direction; he will move to his front with gallantry, and sometimes with dash; if he cannot advance, he will stand still to be shot without flinching; he is, however, not the man spontaneously to adopt a new disposition, to resist or execute a flank attack; he is also little given to take advantage of cover, of profiting by the accidents of the ground; in short, he is still to a great extent a military machine, very helpless in action save under the immediate direction of his officers.'

Again:—

'Artillery fire, unless extraordinarily concentrated, is of little use in preparing the way for an infantry assault of earthworks, provided that the defenders possess underground shelter for themselves.'

Again:—

'One great characteristic of the war has been the abundant use made by both parties—more, however, by the Turks—of the spade, and we have learned that a frontal attack on steady troops ensconced in shelter trenches is almost certain to fail.'

But ere long these lessons passed out of mind and were ignored, and the probable causes of the regrettable neglect of them are not far to seek. The main cause seems to be that our normal warfare in the forty years which followed the Crimean war, and in which occurred the suppression of the Indian Mutiny, was carried on against Asiatics or uncivilised enemies, all inferior in armament to our own; and it was regarded as necessary to cherish in the minds of the rank and file a firm belief in the only form of attack

hitherto successful against Asiatics. Here a resolute advance has been the form of attack which experience showed to be the only one resulting in success. Rarely does the defensive answer; and seeking cover was not to be thought of. Into these wars long-range infantry fire seldom entered.

In Zululand in 1879 one of the 'As-Vogels'—as the later arriving contingent of special-service officers was sarcastically denominated—joined the troops at Port Durnford, and soon expressed his astonishment at the site chosen for the small fort in course of construction, within some 300 yards of a commanding hill. He was confidently assured by officers of experience on the spot that, owing to the indifferent weapons in the hands of the Zulus, and their ignorance in using them, the garrison would be as safe from the hill fire at 300 yards as at several more hundreds of yards further distant.

This matter of long-range infantry rifle fire had come prominently forward in the Franco-German war, but, notwithstanding the superior range of the Chassepôt over the German rifle, the attacking Germans soon managed to arrive near enough to the enemy to use effectively their short-range weapons; and even St. Privat showed that, had the Guard Corps not been huddled together in the closest and most unsuitable formations, they would have arrived at decisive range in overwhelming numbers without any extraordinary losses. The advance from Mars-la-Tour of Von Wedell's Brigade on August 16, 1870, under this fire and across open ground, against Grenier's Division in position on the further side of a deep ravine, was certainly not conclusive of its value against a well-ordered attack in superior force.

And against the adoption of this fire was always urged the undesirableness of undue expenditure of ammunition, expenditure without some assurance of return for it. But it is precisely on the amount of ammunition expended that depends the effectiveness of the fire. If there is a lack in the supply of ammunition, every cartridge expended at long range is a cartridge wasted. It was in this respect that long-range fire in 1870-71 differed so essentially from the same fire in 1877-78. The same name was applied to both, but they were essentially different: the French had no ammunition to spare, the Turks had heaps of cartridges always close at hand. Men who have been under this fire in South Africa tell us of the appalling and unceasing rain of bullets. It is the continued intensity of the storm that constitutes its effectiveness. The Boers had profited by the experience

of 1877-78, and, following the example set by the Turks, had provided themselves with unlimited supplies of ammunition close at hand in the trenches.*

A cause affecting the view taken of the value of entrenchments has been the absolute unreality of the use of entrenchments in our peace training for war; for even in the defence of a position the very slightest disturbance of the surface of the ground by pick or shovel has been always and rigorously interdicted. For real entrenchments were therefore substituted lengths of canvas about two feet broad, which were carried about in rolls; for real entrenching was substituted unrolling the rolls and placing the canvas upright by means of sticks along the line selected for the entrenchments. The whole of this proceeding was egregious folly, for it conveyed to the rank and file no instruction whatever; they learnt nothing of the time required and the difficulties encountered in breaking into virgin soil. For the officers to try to fit a long strip of canvas on to the exact line—a trench which should in some cases, perhaps, be sinuous, and not continuous—was impossible; a mistake in the original selection of the line could be at once remedied by taking up the sham trench bodily and carrying it elsewhere, whilst practice in the concealment of the trench from the enemy's view, so thoroughly mastered by the Boers, was simply impossible when the trench was a piece of yellow canvas standing two feet high above the surface of the ground.

The greatest and most important innovation in tactics, illustrated in 1877-78, was the employment of entrenchments by the attackers in their advance. Great was the impression produced by the accounts of Skobelev's men at the Green Hills using their mess-tins to scrape earth together to give them a safe resting-place under cover in their onward movement, but, owing to the reasons given, this impression soon faded away. Again, exaggerated ideas were formed from the war of 1870-71 as to the destructive power of artillery, especially when the guns were massed. The fact that the artillery to which the Germans were opposed

* Sir George Clarke wrote, in 1880: 'Let a position be fairly well entrenched and held only by well-armed infantry with an unlimited supply of ammunition, and merely able to shoot steadily; and a few mistakes in the general plan of attack, or a want of tactical training of the right kind on the part of the attacking troops, may entail a disaster not easily retrieved.' How prophetic of South Africa in November and December 1899.

were inferior both in the guns and in the training of the arm was, at all events at first, overlooked. The idea of the great power of artillery fire was further strengthened by the improvements in our own guns and projectiles, and it was generally anticipated at the commencement of the South African war that nothing, either in the open or in entrenchments, could hold its own against British shrapnel fire.

The distance of the battlefields where long-range fire and entrenchments had played such important parts was so great that the only military pilgrims who could visit them were those rejoicing in the possession of a long purse. The published accounts given by the combatants were in languages unintelligible to ninety-nine out of a hundred British students of war; so by degrees, from these and the other causes already mentioned, 1877-78 faded out of soldiers' thoughts, and 1870-71 resumed its sway.

To return now from this digression to the consideration of the work before us. It has been truly said that the real *casus belli* of a war is never that which is utilised for the actual outburst of hostilities, and of the Franco-German war the real *casus belli* was not the succession to the Spanish throne, but the war of 1866 between Prussia and the rest of Germany headed by Austria. Of the consequences likely to arise out of that war General Ducrot, one of the most far-seeing generals of the French army, wrote on June 18, 1866, just before the foes came into contact:—

'The state of things we appear to desire to maintain seems to me fatal. If Prussia wins she will owe us nothing for our neutrality, and she will form a Germany as she pleases. If she is beaten, she will be the first to preach a crusade against France to rehabilitate herself in the eyes of Germany and to obtain more favourable conditions.

'I abominate public opinion, which I am sure fetters our Emperor, thwarts and warps his policy, and which, to avoid a few passing embarrassments and sacrifices, prepares for us perhaps a sad future.'

And then he adds words full of warning to ourselves:—

'It is in vain that a great nation such as ours endeavours to inspire its neighbours with sympathy and confidence; it will always be an object of their jealousy and distrust; and it will be able to preserve the position it has acquired, and to play the *rôle* which belongs to it in Europe, only on the condition that it shows itself always strong and inspires a salutary fear.'

And when the war was over he wrote:—

'To regain the position which belongs to us in Europe we must sooner or later embark in a terrible struggle with Prussia, who will be

supported by all Germany and, perhaps, Austria, who will remember against France the Holstein campaign.'

Immediately after Sadowa the Emperor and his War Office set to work on preparations for the coming struggle. The preparations as given in the History were the reorganisation of the French army and the drawing up plans of operations for the campaign. That very important matter, alliances, was apparently not taken into consideration until 1870. As regards the reorganisation, the military element in the councils found itself thwarted by the politicians, who, specially in view of the approaching International Exhibition of 1867, preferred to let matters lie quiet. The Emperor had to give way, so far as outward action was concerned; but his views as to the pressing need for reorganisation were unshaken, and immediately after the Luxemburg incident in 1867 he set to work himself, with the aid of General Lebrun, at the preparation of a scheme. After eight months' work this was completed on January 2, 1868, and 100 copies were printed, of which there is one in the Archives of the French War Office.

According to this project, France would be able on July 1 in that year to put into the field 498,978 men and 918 guns, forming three armies, the Imperial Guard, and two reserve corps. But the project remained a dead-letter. The only measure ultimately adopted, the revival of the Garde Mobile, had little result; so, with the exception of the introduction of the Chassepôt and the mitrailleuse, the condition of the French army, as a fighting-machine, remained unimproved during those critical four years. The unpreparedness of France for the campaign is well known, but only as a general fact, and general facts do not always carry with them great depth of impression. Two of the lessons most important for, and most applicable to, ourselves at the present day are to be drawn from those wasted four years: organise thoroughly, and do not lose or delay an hour in the work.

In vain Ducrot wrote that the nation had material, horses and men, but few soldiers, and was without that organisation which was the secret of rapidity of mobilisation and concentration. Only seven years previous to the attention of the ruling Government of France being forcibly drawn to national military needs owing to Sadowa, the French army had carried out a victorious campaign against another European Power; so her military chiefs necessarily had already a practical knowledge of the needs and require-

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ments of war; yet, as the event showed, it was for France in 1870 the same as if that campaign had never been; and not even four years sufficed for those chiefs to bring her army up to a level with that of her predetermined foe. Surely here for all time is a lesson of the truth of the otherwise somewhat unfortunate remark of Lord Salisbury, that it is the people whose business it is to look after their own defence. May this lesson come home to our readers.

In the appendices to the first four of the five parts now published is given, day by day, the condition of each of the eight corps as regards readiness, or, rather, unreadiness, for the field; and the demands pouring into Paris and Metz for making good the deficiencies. Neither men nor horses appear at the places where they are wanted, and which are designated as their rendezvous. A week after the movement to the frontier commences, and when MacMahon arrives at Strassburg, he finds nothing but the ordinary peace garrison; a Staff officer asking for transport for the Staff is told that he must draw the vehicles and harness from the stores; as regards horses, there is given him 25,000 francs, and he is told to buy them; the drivers he must find himself; and only by desperate measures the troops in their own country are saved from starvation. And so near are they to it that the occupation of that dangerous frontier town, Wissemburg, is urged because in it are good bakeries. On August 2 the patience of the compilers in recording this uninterrupted stream of shortcomings revealed gives way, and they write as follows:—

‘We have published so far the documents dealing with each day separately; it will thus be seen that there was no mobilisation, in the true sense of the word, of the French army. Its organisation was far from being finished on August 2. Placing the army on a war footing will continue during the following days;’

and they announce that from August 2 only selections of documents bearing directly on the operations will be published. One extraordinary instance of want of forethought, and of the impossibility of making it good until too late, must be recorded. The Minister had ordered, on July 28, that no reservists should be sent to their units without an order from himself, so that at the dépôts were thousands of reservists, waiting for orders to join their corps, which themselves were not effective owing to deficiencies in men. Possibly the blocks on the railway lines may have already commenced, and it was only by adopting

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one bad measure that the Minister was able to mitigate the effect of another.

Doubtless in our own country no one outside the official circles can know whether we have a real regular army, corresponding in numbers, equipment, and organisation to the official representation of it on paper. But as regards the huge number of auxiliary forces of Yeomanry, Militia, and Volunteers, there can be no concealment. Every commanding officer of any one of the units of these forces ought to know, and every officer belonging to them can know, if he chooses to do so, whether the unit to which he belongs is in every respect, as a field unit, ready for service. It is these officers who mix freely with the people generally, and live among them; and we hold it to be their imperative duty to keep the public, generally, fully informed on the matter, so that the public may make its voice heard, and deprive the Government of that official cloak of concealment and misrepresentation which is common to our Governments of all parties.

Turning to the next branch of preparation, the plans of the campaign, there were many, of which eleven are given in general terms. They included lines of operation from Cuxhaven on the north to Berlin; and southward, lines of operation from Huningen and old Brisach to Nuremburg and Munich in Southern Germany.

One, doubtless the most important of all, which was furnished by General Frossard, the Governor to the Prince Imperial, is missing, and has not been found in the War Office Archives. This is the more to be regretted because the defensive project from the same pen, and which the Emperor practically accepted for the defence, shows a thorough appreciation of the military situation and is sound strategy.

Frossard's plan of defence was based on the assumption that, although the Germans might make a diversion against Upper Alsace from Southern Germany, the main attack would come from the north-east against the frontier lying between the Moselle and the Rhine. The right wing of the attack would be directed to the opening at Saarbrücken; the left would cross the Lauter about Weisseburg and move forward in the open country between the Vosges and the Rhine. To meet this the left wing of the defenders would take post facing north-east on the position of Calenbronn, a short distance south of Spichenen, the right wing occupying the position of Reischaffen and facing east.

As it would be impossible for the invaders to advance south past the last-named position, leaving it on their flank or rear, this portion of their forces must wheel to its right, and the invading army would have to attack from divergent starting-points an army in two strong positions, with convergent lines of retreat through a country which, from its wooded and hilly character, offers full scope for rearguard delaying actions. Each wing of the defenders could, moreover, send assistance to the other if this were necessary. In the event of defeat, the defenders would find a second line of defence in the Moselle and the Seille from Metz southwards. That the actual defence resolved itself into a species of bastard imitation of this plan was due solely to the unreadiness of the French army and to the incompetency of its leaders.

In connection with the sledge-hammer form of attack adopted by Von Moltke, and the absence of any real attempt to hold some portion of the defending army in Upper Alsace, away from the scene of the actual attack, the thought arises whether Von Moltke may not have been influenced by the desirability of keeping the South German troops under his own control, at all events whilst the war was near the frontier. These troops were but recent recruits to the King of Prussia's army, and most unwilling recruits they were; it would therefore hardly be judicious, by giving any independence to the leaders of these forces, to expose them to the temptation, should the opportunity occur, of breaking away from the service enforced on them. Baden, Bavaria, Wurtemberg, and Saxony would probably, on their own soil, have been but half-hearted opponents of an invader who would undoubtedly in his advance have proclaimed to them an offer of freedom from the hateful Prussian yoke. Frossard's plan had also the advantage that whilst the positions assigned to the corps were good for defence, they served also for any of the plans of offensive campaign that might be adopted.

And as regards the particular offensive plan of campaign which the Emperor intended to adopt, and his anticipations as to its result, this History offers a strange contrast to the statements in a well-known pamphlet entitled '*Des Causes qui ont amené la Capitulation de Sedan*,' which is attributed to the Emperor himself. In this pamphlet the only plan is a crossing the Rhine at Maxau and gaining the support, or at all events securing the neutrality, of Southern Germany.

But the compilers, quoting from the '*Souvenirs Militaires*'

of General Lebrun, show that from March 1870, at the latest, France, Austria and Italy were working together in the endeavour to form a plan of combined campaign against Germany. Lebrun himself was the trusted envoy to Vienna. The real military difficulty lay in the fact that whereas the French army—so Lebrun was authorised by Le Bœuf, the Minister of War, to tell the Archduke Albrecht—could be on the frontier in fourteen days, and ready to take the field on the fifteenth day, the two other Powers would require six weeks for mobilisation. Austria undertook to endeavour during that time to draw away troops to look after her in the state of threatening armed neutrality she would assume, but beyond this she could not go for forty-two days, a long time in modern war. But both Austria and Italy seem to have been playing a waiting game. The withdrawal of the French garrison from Rome—a demand strongly pressed by Italy and supported by Austria—was a convenient diplomatic stumbling-block, causing prolongation of the negotiations. To cross the Rhine at Maxau for the purpose of detaching Southern Germany was an excellent pretext for the first disposal of the French army; but this disposal was a necessary part of any campaign carried out in conjunction with Austria and Italy, so the pretext afforded a cover to the real and secret designs. ‘Des Causes’ now reads somewhat as the reflections of one who was wise only after the event.

It is difficult to understand how it was, if the Emperor was not thoroughly satisfied with the preparations and confident of the future, he should have deliberately, when despatching Colonel Gressly to MacMahon in Algeria, volunteered the statement: ‘This war will be nothing more than an amusement for the Marshal; he will retain the Governorship of Algeria, and will be temporarily replaced by General Durrien, the Vice-Governor. Let him make his arrangements in view of a speedy return to Algeria.’ Le Bœuf was full of confidence, and in his interview with MacMahon, who arrived in Paris on July 21, he told the Marshal that he thought there was a great deal of exaggeration in the views held by Stoffel and Ducrot. The Emperor in an interview talked to MacMahon rather of Algeria than of the coming campaign. To the Marshal the Emperor appeared from the very first to have no doubts as to the defeat of the Germans. And equally clear it seems, although ‘Des Causes’ is silent on the matter, that it was the hoped-for triple alliance, and not a separation of Germany, that

gives the explanation for the intended crossing at Maxau. From the moment war was declared these negotiations were carried on with great activity, and so late as August 3, the day before Weissemburg, the Italian Envoy quitted Metz for Vienna with a fresh draft of a treaty.

It was on July 24 that Le Boeuf, it was on July 28 that the Emperor, on their respective arrivals at Metz, learnt for the first time that the French army, which was to be their instrument in the great venture to lay Prussia low, and to change the face of Europe, was indeed but the baseless fabric of a dream.

The daily record given in this work proves thoroughly that the cry which soon burst from the sorely tried rank and file, and which found, doubtless, an echo in the hearts of the regimental officers, '*Nous sommes trahis,*' was literally true, though not in the sense in which it was used by those who uttered it. There was no treachery, there were no traitors after the war broke out; the treachery and the traitors existed before the war. The traitors to their country were the officers who had been the vast military hierarchy of the French army in the time of peace since 1859; the officers who filled comfortable posts in peace time, learnt nothing about their work, knew nothing about it; who, believing war certain in the near future, had not prepared themselves for it, had posed as men in responsible positions on the Staff, but when the touchstone of active service was applied to them showed that to the posts they had occupied they had not considered any real responsibility whatever attached. '*Les Causes qui ont amené la capitulation de Sedan*' have not yet been published to the world, but they will be found in the inner history of the Staff of the French army from 1859 to 1870, if ever that history sees the light.

The record from July 28 is really painful reading for those who appreciate at its full worth the splendid bravery and the grand fighting of the French troops. Without a real leader the best army is powerless; and here there was no leader anywhere, and it may be doubted that even near the nominal leader was there, in a subordinate position, any real leader to whom he could look for help and assistance. All idea of the offensive had to be speedily given up; but there was in an active defence full scope for decisive action. Not two miles in front of one corps ran the great railway connecting the wings of the approaching German host—that from Treves by Saarlouis, Saarbrücken, Neunkirchen, Homburg.

Kaiserslautern. To thoroughly destroy this must necessarily affect the earlier stages of the war and gain time; but anything of this kind was rejected as likely to provoke the enemy, and was forbidden. At one time a *coup-de-main* on Saarlouis entered into consideration; but the Emperor, like many men in similar positions engaged in great undertakings, was a man of one idea only, and, having to resign that, he had no other to adopt in its place. Undoubtedly, as we learn from the German History, Von Moltke was somewhat puzzled as to the intentions of the French; and no wonder, for day after day corps wandered about in almost aimless fashion, to suit what appeared to the leader to be the requirements of the moment.

And it was solely according to those momentary requirements that from July 29 to August 4, and not according to any well-considered and definite plan, that the Emperor worked the force at his disposal. An account of the affair at Saarbrücken on August 2, when one whole French army corps, supported by a second, was engaged all day with nine companies of Prussian infantry and six guns, on outposts, is given in full detail in this History. The encounter itself was trivial in the extreme, but it will be dealt with somewhat fully here, for it is a real revelation, throwing a flood of light on the character and methods of the higher leading of the French Army in 1870. It may be accepted as a type of that leading throughout the period of disasters that culminated in the catastrophe at Sedan; and when contrasted with the German leading, it shows conclusively how unequally the contending armies were matched; and at the same time compels us to acknowledge that in Von Moltke's second great campaign, as in his first in 1866, that great soldier did not have to deal with a commander worthy of his steel.

The Emperor on July 29, the day following his arrival at Metz, went to St.-Avoird to confer with General Frossard, commanding the 2nd Army Corps, as to the future. General de Failly, commanding the 5th Army Corps, and General Coffinières, the Army Commander of Engineers, were present at the conference. The Emperor was hesitating as to the course of action to be adopted. Crossing the Rhine at Maxau at once was no longer to be thought of; a *coup-de-main* against Saarlouis was practicable. On the other hand, reports, utterly baseless, indicated the concentration of a very large hostile force in rear of Saarbrücken, and also of Duttweiler, four miles further north. Saar-

brücken had always been regarded as one of the points at which the enemy would seek to penetrate into France, and it might be necessary to take up a defensive position against him. The final conclusion arrived at was to make a reconnaissance in force (*reconnaissance offensive*) on Saarbrücken. Frossard was ready to carry out the operation on August 1. The orders issued by the Emperor on July 30 fixed August 2 for the operation. The 2nd Corps was to cross the Saar above Saarbrücken on two bridges to be thrown over by the army bridge train; the 2nd Corps was to be supported by the passage of two divisions of the 3rd Corps (Bazaine) just below the town, and by two divisions of the 5th Corps which, coming from Saargemund, eight miles up stream, were to march towards Saarbrücken along the right bank of the river.

To Marshal Bazaine was given the command of the whole operation; the details of the operation were not entrusted, however, simply to him alone, but were to be settled on July 31 at a conference in which Bazaine, Frossard, de Failly, Coffinières, and Soleille (the Army Commander of Artillery) took part. Doubtless its deliberations were aided by the receipt at Metz, on the previous day, of a first batch of 600 copies of the only map of the country, showing the roads to the Rhine; a facsimile of the map, which is astonishingly bad, is given. It seems to be a hurried production, neither scale nor compass points appearing on it. So late as August 4 General Ducrot was the only possessor of a map of the east side of the Vosges in that part of the theatre of war. At eleven in the morning of July 31 the conference assembled at Forbach, and, as in most councils of war, the generals at once began to differ with each other. By degrees the original proposal was whittled down until unanimity was obtained, and this unanimity was to limit the operation to seizing and occupying the positions on the low range of hills overlooking Saarbrücken from the left bank, and whence the railway station of the suburb of St.-Johann could be commanded by artillery. Any crossing of the river was cut out of the programme. Of this decision the Emperor approved later in the day. But the mountain had already been undergoing some of the pangs of labour to bring forth even this mouse. The marching had begun on July 31. But how to arrange marches of troops in large bodies was beyond either the knowledge or ability of the French Staff.

The marches of the corps were generally executed by marches of divisions, each division marching by itself without

any regard to its neighbours, and without the corps and divisional commanders co-operating for this marching, although it was in broken country covered with woods and forests; collisions, friction, and delays became inevitable. As an instance, Bazaine had ordered the 1st Division (Montaudon) of his own corps to move off at five in the morning to St.-Avold; but Frossard intimated to General Montaudon that the division (Vergè) of the 2nd Corps which was there would not leave the place until seven o'clock, and he requested him not to be at St.-Avold before nine. Montaudon put off his departure four hours, until nine, and even when arriving at St.-Avold had to keep his division standing in a pouring rain, as Frossard's head-quarter baggage was blocking the road. The marches were very short, varying from six to twelve miles, but they occupied a long time. The French army had had no experience of cantoning since 1815; in their wars they had always, at the conclusion of the day's march, encamped. So a corps or division, being concentrated on one spot, the commencement of a day's march was necessarily a process of unrolling, the conclusion was a process of rolling up again; consequently the troops in rear started very late, and could arrive only very late; and to intensify the evil, the hour to commence the march was also far too late, being generally not before nine o'clock, even in those early autumn or late summer days.

For the operation two whole corps (the 2nd and the 3rd), one division of the 4th, and two of the 5th—ten divisions in all—had been placed at Bazaine's disposal; but what part Bazaine played, or what was his idea of the exercise of command, it is difficult to ascertain. August 2 foreshadowed the exercise of command at Metz and Sedan. Although the Marshal was in supreme command, there is no trace of his having given Frossard, who was charged with the main attack, any orders at all. At 9 A.M., August 1, he wired to Frossard, 'Tell me at what time you will commence the operations, so that I can arrange my own movements.' Frossard replied that 'he should attack at ten o'clock, because the fog would be in the way earlier and the Prussians would not expect anything at that hour.' Most certainly not—the German habits of campaigning were sometimes unpleasantly early.

On August 2 Frossard produces his *spectacle militaire*, which is graced by Imperial presence. What part he took in it himself, beyond that of stage-manager, the historians

cannot tell us: they merely say that from the orders no one could tell where he was to be found; but that to compensate for this he arranged beforehand minute details which are the province of subordinate commanders. What enemy is supposed to be in front, and where the enemy is supposed to be, are not communicated to the attacking force; and without even any advanced guard, the whole corps deploys in line of battle, and resolutely advances to capture the low hills on which the hostile outposts stand watching for the onset. As these outposts are but five companies of infantry and two guns, the great feat is soon accomplished.

Frossard's troops, having cleared the part of the town on the hither bank, stand on the low range of hills, looking down proudly and contentedly on the three permanent bridges on the river, but not attempting to secure them; and also at the important railway station and railway two miles distant on the other bank, and which a very slight effort would have sufficed to completely destroy and render useless to the invaders for a long time; the only other German troops to be driven off being eight more companies with four guns and a squadron of cavalry. Four days later, on August 6, steamed into this very station a train carrying the 1st Battalion of the 12th Brandenburg Regiment, which, dismounting from the carriages, crossed these same bridges, and, hurrying to the battlefield of Spicheren, arrived there at one of the most critical moments, and helped to overthrow this same 2nd Army Corps. And during this skirmish of August 2, where was the Chief Commander, Bazaine? But maybe he did not consider himself the chief commander. The testimony is conflicting. First comes on the scene of action Le Bœuf, the Major-General of the army;* he is followed by the Emperor and the Prince Imperial. The Emperor wishes to see Bazaine, and search is made for him, but he is nowhere to be found. He had gone away with a small force on a reconnaissance towards Saarlouis, which he believed would give him better employment than he would find elsewhere. Earlier in the day he had sent to Frossard notification of his arrival at Forbach; but Frossard was engaged in conference with Le Bœuf, so Bazaine did not wait for him. Bazaine was quite unaware that the Emperor intended to be present, but as soon as he heard of his arrival he galloped

* Marshal Le Bœuf had handed over to General Déjean the duties of the Minister of War, and had joined the Army as its Chief Staff Officer, a post designated 'le Major-Général de l'Armée.'

back, only to find that the Emperor had gone back to Metz. Colonel d'Andlau asserts that the Emperor and Le Bœuf reserved to themselves the power of taking command on the battlefield, so that this annulled its previous delegation to Bazaine. But the whole matter is involved in mystery, and is a striking illustration of the utter hopelessness of French command at this period. Meanwhile De Failly, with two divisions and a cavalry brigade of the 5th Corps, had moved off from Saargemund, down the right bank of the Saar, towards Saarbrücken. This really important operation resolved itself into an advance three miles down the river, and then the two divisions deployed into position, cut four times by the Saar and a bend of the Blies, the Cavalry Brigade being also *à cheval* the Blies on the extreme right. The cavalry reconnaissance was limited on the average to $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile to the front. That characteristic of the French army, love of initiative, the keen love of the attack, was strong as ever among the rank and file, but had died out among the higher leaders, owing, so the compilers tell us, to the dissemination of exaggerated views in recent years as to the superiority of the defence over the attack, due to the improvement in firearms, and inculcated by the official instructions for the army. So this war was to be a war of positions.

And whilst there is no power of actual leading in the campaign or on the battlefield, the danger of the situation is intensified by ignorance of the method of exercising command. There is no single source of control, no single source of command. There are three powers acting against each other, and often directly contrary to each other—the Emperor, the Major-General, and the two general officers who are the assistants to the Major-General; orders and counter-orders succeed each other without cessation. The troops, tossed about on the roads from one point to another, know not what to do; disgusted by useless marches and shifting about, they lose all confidence in command. The Emperor sometimes gives orders direct to the troops without his immediate Staff knowing of them. Von Weyde writes:—

‘The Emperor never told anyone of his intentions. He himself disposed of the divisions separately, thus rendering useless the orders of their corps commanders.’ It resulted that no one knew why he had to do the work assigned to him or what he was expected to do. So the commanders simply remained with their arms folded, waiting for what might turn up, until a fresh order or some movement of the enemy afforded a fresh impulse to action.’

The corps are exhausted and disorganised before they encounter the enemy. No decision on any matter, however trivial, can be regarded as final, for advice is taken from many quarters, and the last taken would generally be that adopted. This part of the record shows not only that generals cannot lead and command unless they have a capable and well-instructed staff, but also that a staff, however capable and well instructed, is little more than a cipher unless the general knows how to use it.

And in no branch of the leading of the two hostile armies is offered a more marked and more vital contrast than in this of 'order giving.' The German system was simple, business-like, sure, and methodical, and it afforded a wholesome and effective check on an impatient, interfering, or fussy commander. Between the chief commander of a force and his sub-commanders and heads of departments there is no direct communication, so far as orders are concerned. By his side is always the senior officer of his staff, his chief staff officer. To this officer the commander communicates his views and wishes as regards any movement or operation he may intend to carry out. This officer at once proceeds to embody those views and wishes in written orders, in a form arrived at by long experience, and which contains, first, the information available as to the enemy, and the object of the movement or operation, and then, in a regular and well-established sequence, the part which each sub-commander and head of department will have to play in it with the troops under his command; and to these officers he himself communicates the orders. These officers understand what is to be done, and its purpose; they know to what extent they are to co-operate with others, and what co-operation they may expect to receive from others. And since no order of the chief commander can be sent or received, except through this one channel, the chief staff officer, there is a record of every order sent; contradictory orders are impossible; counter-orders can emanate from the chief commander only, and, if they are issued, the chief staff officer knows of them, and is able to give warning of the alterations to all concerned. Similarly, the chief staff officer is the sole channel of reports and messages sent by subordinates to the chief commander. The chain of transmission of orders from higher to lower is preserved intact, so that only in the rarest cases will a commander find his subordinate acting under any orders but his own. Where, however, circumstances compel an order to take a short cut,

the intermediate link passed over is at once notified of the fact.

After the war of 1870-71 this system was at once recognised in this country as not only thoroughly sound, but the only one securing the proper issue and distribution of orders in a force of any size in civilised warfare. It was adopted into our home army; it was taught at the Staff College and in all classes of military instruction, and was the only system recognised at Aldershot and our manœuvres. It was the one lesson of the war that seemed to have taken permanent place in our military economy; and, in fact, the First Army Corps, when it left this country for South Africa, had been trained on this system. Yet, strange as it may sound, whilst in certain Divisions, such as those commanded by Aldershot generals, it held good with most excellent results, in the higher leading of the army it did not take hold. Neither of the three distinguished soldiers, Earl Roberts, Lord Kitchener, or Sir Redvers Buller, had, before landing in South Africa, ever commanded a large force in civilised warfare. Each of them had his own method of command; they did not therefore appreciate at its real value the German system of 'order-giving.' Lord Kitchener bore the title of 'Chief of the Staff' to Lord Roberts, but he was no more a 'Chief of the Staff' to Lord Roberts than Lord Roberts was to him. The personal system of order-giving prevailed, as it had done in the French Army in 1870-71, and orders sometimes reached a commander through more than one channel. Major-General Sir H. Colville in his 'Work of the Ninth Division' records that on one day, May 18, he received from three different Staff officers messages relating to the movements of troops—the Assistant Adjutant-General Headquarters, the Military Secretary, and the Chief Staff Officer Bloemfontein. This is not better than the French system described in this work. The lamentable result of this non-acceptance of one of the clearest lessons of a war is an open secret; and as regards this most important branch of Staff work, the South African campaign shows a lesson from war unlearned.

Of the operations and movements on August 3 and 4 in Lorraine, we learn that they were governed by no certain aim; they were such as to meet each report of the enemy's movements and initiatives as it was received at the Imperial Headquarters at Metz.

But these headquarters, although very fairly acquainted with the actual disposition of the enemy, were still under

the delusion that the enemy was yet far from ready to strike, so that the news of Weisseburg, received on the evening of the 4th, came almost as a bolt from the blue. Alsace had, to all intents and purposes, from the declaration of war up to the day previous to Weisseburg been practically defenceless. The corps assigned for its defence were the 1st Corps—MacMahon's—of which the rendezvous was Strassburg, 35 miles from the north-eastern frontier, which is there formed by the Lauter; and F. Douay's 7th Corps, of which the rendezvous was Belfort, 60 miles further south; but Dumesnil's division of the corps was at Lyons, 200 miles from Belfort. MacMahon's troops had mainly to come from Algeria, and only Ducrot's division had moved north towards the Lauter; and as Lyons could not be left without troops, it was not until the 4th that the concentration of the 1st Corps nearer the Lauter could be carried out, and for this orders were issued on the 2nd; but on the evening of that day Bavarian troops were reported to have been already in Weisseburg, ascertaining the resources of the place, in view, so they asserted, of the arrival of troops within four-and-twenty hours. Now the urgency was apparent. MacMahon, on receipt of this news, ordered A. Douay with the division at Hagenau to move north on the 3rd, instead of the 4th. Ducrot, under whose command he was temporarily placed, writes to him that he does not believe the enemy are sufficiently near in force for any serious operation. At 4 A.M. on the third A. Douay, with his division, left Hagenau, and at 10.30 arrived at Sulz, where he was to halt, draw rations and other most necessary articles of equipment. For these he waited five hours in vain, and then resumed his march to Weisseburg, opposite which his troops arrived in the dark at 8.30 without the General having in his possession one single map from which to learn something about the country into which he was suddenly launched. He was separated from the 1st Division by a seven hours' march across the Vosges, and by 10½ and 11½ hours' march from any other assistance. Moreover, not any information had been given him as to the position of the enemy.

At half-past eight on the morning of August 4 commenced to issue from the forest beyond Weisseburg the host of three German corps, all of which took part in the combat against the 5,200 infantry, the 900 sabres, and the 18 guns which were all that Douay had to oppose to them. Douay lost his life early in the day, and the command fell

to General Pellé. The result of the combat could not be in doubt; but the splendid bravery of the troops and the skill with which much of the eventual retreat west towards Reischaffen and Worth was conducted are among the brilliant feats of the losing side during the war.

The news of the defeat at Weisseburg, so totally unexpected, since in MacMahon's correspondence there had not been anything to create alarm or anxiety, was another of those blinding blows which the Imperial Headquarters seemed destined to receive in quick succession from time to time. Emotion appears to have at once taken the lead, superseding calm judgment. Immediate revenge was demanded. Le Bœuf proposed for adoption a plan emanating from either Lebrun or Jarras—namely, to launch at once two or three corps by Saargemund on Homburg to sever the important Saarlouis-Mayence Railway. This was certainly shutting the stable-door after the steed was stolen. The Emperor determined, before adopting this plan, to consult the artillery and engineer chiefs and the head of the supply department. The first two concurred without reserve; but the last named declared that from reliable information he believed the country beyond the frontier to be already swept by the enemy clear of supplies: the army could exist only by carrying its food with it, and its food was even now being drawn from the interior of France, and there was only two days' supply in hand. So the plan was given up. Frossard's corps was left as an advanced guard on the Saar, Faily's corps was drawn westward from Saargemund to Bitsch, and was to be placed under the command of MacMahon; a division from the 3rd Corps was to move to Saargemund, to close the opening at that place, whilst the other three corps were to be collected somewhat further from the frontier in rear of Frossard. It was on these lines that the final orders for the 5th were drawn up and issued, and here the record comes provisionally to an end.

During the last four or five years, and especially since the outbreak of the South African War, there has been a decided reaction against the study of the Franco-German War, and there is a disposition to regard it as a 'moribund' campaign. Every campaign, whether studied from the standpoint of the victor or from that of the vanquished, affords, however, teaching and instruction on two matters common to all wars: the one is the employment of force and the direction given to that force in the theatre of war, where it is generally known as strategy, and on the field of battle, where it bears

the name of tactics; the other is the mechanism and the machinery through which that force acts: these are the organisation, the administration, the training, the control and the command of the army, which is the force itself, and on the soundness of the second depend now more than ever the results of the first. The first is the work in war, the second is preparation in peace time for war. On both these matters we have had a great deal of information as regards the victors in 1870-71; this information has clearly shown the value of preparation for war, and what good preparation means; and it is, as it were, a standard held up before us, and to which we should seek to attain. But, after all, the mere exhibition of a high standard does not necessarily act as an incentive to strive to reach it. To many of us a more powerful incentive is the portrayal of the ills we shall bring on others if we do not reach it. As respects 1870-71 this incentive, this warning must come from the vanquished. Herein lies the great value of that portion of the History which is before us, and especially of the appendices in it, for these show in detail the almost complete absence of the real preparation of an army for war, whilst the main body of the work gives the lamentable result. The succeeding parts of the History will give us lessons on the intensified effect in the trying hours of defeat and disaster of this want of preparation, and will doubtless accentuate the lesson, that whilst an army not thoroughly prepared in peace may win campaigns against enemies of a lower grade of civilisation than itself, it simply courts disaster when it enters the field against an enemy as advanced in civilisation as itself.

In this article it has been the endeavour of the writer, on the one hand, to point out the value of the study of War as a Teacher of War, and, on the other, to show the difficulties surrounding this study, and the liability of even the most painstaking and conscientious students to deduce from it false and dangerous conclusions as guides to future action. In our own army in the past the value and the importance of the study have not been recognised, either by the military authorities, save exceptionally, or by the mass of the officers; and owing to the small number of students the conclusions deduced have been rather the *dicta* of individuals than general assent based on experience, sound reasoning, and military common-sense. Save for the superior leaders of our numerous minor and other expeditions in the last forty years, the qualifications of the officers for successful leading were courage, dogged determination and endurance,

combined with marked individualism, rather than any profound knowledge of the military history of the growth of the Empire, or of the struggles between other nations on their battlefields; these matters were, for our officers, of little practical interest or value. But even if any officer desired to study military history, the means were wanting, owing to the lamentable and notorious deficiency of military literature in the English language. The study has therefore been confined to a very few officers, possessing a knowledge of French and German, and, of these few, the majority occupied educational posts; so that on the one side were the students of military history, chiefly teachers, and on the other, the so-called practical soldiers, between whom and the former there was little in common. But in threshing out questions of military history the larger the number who take part in the operation, the greater the amount of truth likely to be garnered, and the less the chance of 'fads' and 'hobbies' getting the upper hand; so the paucity of the students was regrettable.

The time has now come for the authorities to take an entirely new departure in their view of War as a Teacher of War—the British Army of 1902 is not the British Army of 1899. The army of to-day, taught by painful experience, will receive gladly the lessons of war in the past, if these are put within its reach; it will no longer look askance at those lessons merely because they are in printers' ink. But military history is not to be mastered in classes of instruction, or by listening to lectures, or passing examinations. The mastery can be acquired only by individual reading of books and by meditation upon them. For our army the necessary literature should, therefore, be brought into existence by the military authorities, and then placed at the disposal of the officers; the preparation of the works, both original and translations, and their publication should be regarded as a branch of the military education of the officers. The study of military history by our officers is all-important; but the first step towards that study is its popularisation among them, and the first step in that popularisation is the provision of ample facilities for obtaining materials for the study—a provision which should not be left to private enterprise, but which it is the duty of the military authorities to secure.

APP. II.—*The Life and Letters of Lady Sarah Lennox, 1745–1826, with a short political sketch of the years 1760 to 1768.* By HENRY FOX (1st Lord Holland). Edited by the Countess of ILCHESTER and Lord STAVORDALE. In 2 vols. London: John Murray. 1901.

EVERY generation that has grown old looks back to the golden age of its own youth. 'Tis sixty years since! And throughout these sixty years, if we are to place implicit confidence in the fond recollections of our elders, the world has been on the downward grade. In England we hear and read every day of the falling away from the high standard of our ancestors. Religion has been undermined. Politics, from having been a great conflict of opposing principles, have become a mere factious bidding for the support of the mob. Parliament is degraded. Our commercial supremacy is doomed. Honest trade has given way to mere speculation, and bankruptcy has ceased to bring discredit. In old days greater rectitude, more simplicity of life, even higher morals and better manners prevailed. It was a simpler, pleasanter, gayer, better-behaved world in the early 'forties' of the nineteenth than in the opening years of the twentieth century. This is the tradition.

When we turn from present-day recollections of the past, and from histories written long after the period they describe, to the contemporary writings of these same ancestors of ours, when we read what they thought and said of each other in their most confidential letters to each other, a very different picture is presented to our view. Instead of apologising for ourselves, we are driven to make excuses for them, and to call to mind that, in comparing the present with the past, the latter is exposed to far the fiercer light, for the lapse of time has dispensed with the necessity of maintaining appearances, all veils have been torn down, and what was once told amongst intimate friends under the strictest seal of secrecy is now recorded in black and white for all the world to read.

In 1818 Lady Susan O'Brien, the life-long friend and correspondent of Lady Sarah Lennox, jotted down some of the changes that had come under her own observation since 1760.* Society, she says, had become far too large. At Court, Drawing-rooms once a week, which, 'a well-regulated and elegant assembly of the best company,' mostly of titled

* 'The Life and Letters of Lady Sarah Lennox,' vol. ii., Appendix.

and official personages and connexions of the Court, used to attend, had given place to much more frequent gatherings, to which 'everybody, man or woman, that assumes the 'name of gentleman or lady go,' making 'crowds so great 'and of so little decorum that people's clothes are literally 'torn to pieces.' In 1760 'Assemblies' of the larger kind were held only at the great houses, such as Bedford House, Northumberland House, Norfolk House, Lady Shelburne's, &c.; whilst less magnificent hostesses 'had their own 'acquaintance in such parties as their houses could accommodate agreeably, always according to the card-tables—for cards were indispensable for all parties. Balls were 'few. One place in one evening was an engagement and 'sufficient amusement. But now,' says Lady Susan, assemblies have become so numerous that '2 or 3 of a night 'it is common to go to. The size of the house is not 'thought of much consequence, as if it is not quite crowded 'it is not thought good or agreeable; more people can be 'contained in a large one, but the crowd must be equal 'everywhere. No cards are admitted. Music, in which all 'are proficient, has taken their place. Balls extremely 'numerous.' The theatres, which in 1760 ladies, even unaccompanied by gentlemen, were able to attend had, along with the company that frequented them, deteriorated to such an extent by 1818, that respectable people could not go to the play without running great risk of 'seeing and 'hearing very improper things.' No doubt the change to late hours had much to answer for. In the former year the 'Houses of Parliament met early, and, when no particular business was expected, were up time enough for the 'dinner-hour, universally 4 o'clock. This allowed for going 'easily to the Play, Opera, or to Card parties, and for 'keeping early hours at night; long speeches were very 'rare, even with the great orators.' But 'now (1818) Parliament does not meet till 4 or 5 o'clock; long speeches 'are in daily practice on every topic, and by everybody. 'All are orators. This mania has occasioned the lateness 'of every amusement and every topic and family transaction '—dinner at 7 or 8 o'clock, parties beginning at ten, balls 'at eleven or twelve. Thus everything is done by candle-light, which adds greatly to the expense in large families, 'is hurtful to the health of young persons, and the morals 'of the lower classes.'

This melancholy decadence is found everywhere. The respect once shown for age and rank has given place to a

vulgar familiarity, and the general civility that had prevailed in every class is gone. 'Persons with or without titles are now called by their Christian names . . . every man, tradesman, or farmer is Esquire, and every prentice 'girl a young lady.' It was not amongst 'the lower classes' only that morals had suffered. A spirit of greediness and cheating had taken possession of our merchants and traders. Society paid little regard to the virtue of the fairer sex. Democratic ways had come in with the French Revolution, and every alehouse club presumed to discuss the conduct of the Royal Family, and the state of the representation. 'Every parish has its committee to arrange something or other. No committee but call themselves 'gentlemen, thank their chairman, and ape everything of this kind in their superiors. At present (as once before) 'the kingdom is governed by committees. The consequence 'may probably be the same.'

Eighty-four years have passed since Lady Susan, in her old age, recorded in her note-book these and other symptoms of our national decay; and we are able to see that changes of fashion, which in her eyes seemed of such vast importance, did not really involve the deeper consequences which she anticipated. The morals of Courts and of 'society,' and the manners of men, may have advanced or receded somewhat from age to age; but it is hardly possible to doubt that the people, as a whole, have made progress in civilisation along the whole line, and that in morals and in manners there is little reason to mourn that in any class there has been a falling away from the standard of the 'good old 'times.'

The 'Life and Letters of Lady Sarah Lennox' makes intimately known to us a personality of singular charm. To Lady Sarah, in her own day and since, much interest has always attached. When only just out of her childhood, King George III., little more than a boy, proposed to her, and Lady Sarah would have become Queen of England had not those who surrounded the King, combining with statesmen, who feared the influence which so close a connexion with the throne would have brought to her brother-in-law, Lord Holland, induced him to give her up. Before she was sixteen Horace Walpole describes her acting at Holland House with Lady Susan Strangways* and Charles

* Lady Susan Strangways, afterwards Lady Susan O'Brien, was a daughter of Lord Ilchester, elder brother of Henry Fox.

Fox in 'Jane Shore.' 'I was infinitely more struck with the last scene between the two women than ever I was when I have seen it on the stage. When Lady Sarah was in white, with her hair about her ears, and on the ground, no Magdalen by Correggio was half so lovely and expressive.' To a large extent Holland House was the home of her girlhood. It was her sister, Lady Caroline, who had made the secret marriage with Henry Fox (afterwards first Lord Holland), which sixteen or seventeen years earlier had convulsed Court circles and London society. The political sympathies in which Lady Sarah grew up clung to her through life; and her genuine Whiggism characterises her allusions to passing events and contemporary statesmen in all the letters which during half a century she wrote to her lifelong friend, Lady Susan.

This book, however, is no political biography. It is only quite incidentally that the letters touch upon politics at all. Even 'Lord Holland's Memoir,' prefixed to vol. i., though interesting, adds hardly anything to our knowledge of events at the opening of George III.'s reign. Yet an understanding of the men and women of the time, of their strong political principles and prejudices, and of the way in which they regarded each other, can often be much better gained from unpretending literature of this kind than from the works of grave students of history. Throughout all her letters it is Lady Sarah herself, not the events about which she is writing, that really interests the reader.

In the 'Memoir' Lord Holland shows himself in the character he has already won in history—as one of the most worldly-minded and self-seeking of the statesmen of the eighteenth century. In his letters to the young Lord Shelburne* we have seen him doing his best to drive any 'high imaginings' out of the head of that rising statesman as quite unsuited to those schemes of self-advancement which he himself conceived to be the real business of politicians. In the 'Memoir' his comments on the characters, motives, and conduct of his contemporaries afford a good insight into the true nature of the man who makes them. His ability is undeniable; his comments sometimes pungent and true; his descriptions often interesting as to what has come under his own observation. On October 15, 1760, George II. at seven in the morning,

* 'The Life of the Earl of Shelburne,' by Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice. London, 1875.

'suddenly fell down dead,' and 'all sorts of people, great and little, friends and enemies, conspired in saying that the Duke of Newcastle (the Prime Minister), remaining where he was, was absolutely necessary. Strange that unless a worthless and a silly and an ignorant man is at the head of a state it cannot flourish. I never thought so, but I was not sorry others said it, who probably thought it no more than I do.' (Henry Fox was at that time a very highly paid Minister of the Crown, but outside the Cabinet.) On November 6 a sort of 'inner Cabinet,' consisting of Newcastle, Bute, Pitt, and Hardwicke, settled the King's Speech, which was read by the King on opening Parliament a fortnight later, 'with too much studied action, and laying the accent on the first syllable of *állys* and *révenues*, which is after the Scotch pronunciation.' In that case the Scotch fashion has prevailed, if at least modern representatives of the Foreign Office and the Exchequer may be accounted authorities as to the pronunciation of words constantly in their mouths. It is unnecessary to refer to the already sufficiently well-known disagreements and ruptures which soon brought the Newcastle and the Bute Governments to an end.

Fox's comments on his colleagues and contemporaries are biting enough: Pitt only 'attends to that nonsensical thing, undeserved popularity with the dregs of the people.' 'The Primate of Ireland is a false, artful, meddling priest.' In March, 1761, Bute became Secretary of State, and Fox, attending at Court, feels how right he has always been in considering a new reign a new world, of which nothing could be known, and as to which no schemes could be laid beforehand. His contemporaries were rapidly sketched. Lord Barrington, Chancellor of the Exchequer, a frivolous, 'little-minded man, not honest or abler than his predecessor.' That predecessor was Legge, who had been remarkable 'for sacrificing every honest consideration to selfish cunning.' . . . 'Charles Townshend's transcendent parts, his good qualities, and his great failings, will have made him sufficiently known before these memoirs are read.' Sufficiently known, indeed! For long 'before these memoirs were read' Charles Townshend's name had for ever found a place in English history as that of the brilliant statesman who brought about the loss of America and almost wrecked the Empire. . . . 'Lord Holderness shows servile submission and complaisance.' 'Temple would be the most insignificant man in England but for his relation to

‘Pitt.’ And in Pitt himself Fox is incapable of recognising the greatness of soul which lay behind the vanity and arrogance which he condemned.

When King George III. came to the throne, no doubt the old Whigs ‘stood aghast’ at the signs immediately appearing of the King’s intention to look for friends beyond their charmed circle. The Tories were coming to Court and into office, which in the eyes of the Duke of Devonshire and orthodox Whigs meant sheer ‘confusion.’ At such a time politicians do not show themselves at their best. There was, however, a great political question about which statesmen differed vehemently—the making of peace or the prolongation of the war. They were not, after all, entirely taken up with sordid considerations of place and profit. Pitt and Temple were, of course, for war; and Fox, like many another dissatisfied statesman before and since, is unable to see any but the lowest motives in those with whom he disagrees, or whose fame he envies. Pitt, he thinks, was trying to escape responsibility for a peace which, however right in itself and beneficial to the country, would be unpopular.

‘What can be his meaning, or what can it be resolved into but a desire that a peace may be made without him, which he may say had been better if he had had his way? And is there either honesty or sense in this, if it is his intention? To obstruct and delay a peace that he must approve at the expense of thousands of lives and misery of thousands of families! What must the man be, or can he be a man who will allow this to his vanity and passion? . . . Others say that he knows when a peace comes he must be of no consequence, and scruples nothing to put off the evil hour. What a representation is that of a fiend rather than a human creature! And had it not been more politic to cry up and call this peace, his glorious conclusion of his glorious war, which would, I think, by very many have been allowed him. If he proceeds then the day will come, early in the next session, when he will be treated as he deserves; and I know no man who can so ill bear up against an attack where no Court supports him.’

In the autumn Pitt and Lord Temple left the Government, and Fox’s belief that Pitt’s power was dependent upon Court support was, he says, further confirmed by his weak resistance to the famous attack upon him in the House of Commons by Colonel Barré. Henry Fox saw in Pitt ‘a ‘mountebank,’ and little more. He had a very low estimate either of his ‘intentions or his abilities.’ ‘It is already ‘growing no paradox,’ Fox writes in 1761, ‘and it will, ‘perhaps, by the time these papers are read, be an allowed

‘truth, that Mr. Pitt, who has made so great a figure these four years, was what Lord Winchelsea four years ago said he was, a very silly fellow.’

A few years later (1768) Henry Fox sums up the four great mistakes he attributes to Lord Bute. At the time he had been surprised by the ferocity of the attacks and the violence of the agitation against the Prime Minister. ‘The fire was fed with great industry and blown by a national prejudice which is inveterate and universal. Every man has at some time or other found a Scotchman in his way, and everybody has therefore damned the Scotch; and this hatred their excessive nationality has inflamed.’ Because Lord Bute thought a peace necessary, a peace on any terms was denounced. ‘But the true objections, his being a Scotchman and a Favourite, are avowed, and on these articles he is most scurrilously accused even in a public paper, with as little disguise as ever faction were boldly attacked, and told of his intrigue with the Princess Dowr. of Wales.’

In the spring of 1761 the admiration of the King for Lady Sarah Lennox was matter of common gossip. Lady Sarah as early as 1759, before she was fifteen, used to go to children’s parties at the Court of George II., and had there been much noticed by the Prince of Wales. The acquaintance had been kept up, and in March, after his accession, the new King, through Lady Susan Strangways, sent a verbal message to Lady Sarah, which the latter was certainly entitled to think indicated an intention to propose if he met with any encouragement. From Lady Sarah’s letter to her friend at the end of February it appears that the former fully expected the King to speak confidentially about her to Lady Susan. As soon as Lady Sarah appeared at Court, a week or two after she had received the King’s message, the King approached her and asked her what she thought of the communication he had made to her. The lady, however, far from giving him the encouragement he hoped for, ‘made no answer, but looked as cross as she could, and His Majesty, affronted and confused, at once left the Drawing Room.’ Lady Sarah’s cold bearing was due to a passing fancy she then entertained for Lord Newbattle, who had proposed to her, but who had not gained the approval of his parents for the match. Accident, however, intervened to help the efforts of those who were doing their best to keep the King and Lady Sarah apart; for a fall, when hunting with her friend Lady Susan in Somersetshire, broke her leg, and forced her to remain for many weeks at Lord Ilchester’s

place in that county. It was not till the end of May that she returned to town, cured, by his own indifference, of any sentiment she may have had for Lord Newbottle.

Henry Fox's hopes rose high. He had been hurt to see 'so much ridiculous German pride,' even on the part of 'the sensible English Duke of Cumberland, who had been 'much discomposed' at hearing of the King's intentions. So had the Royal Family in general. 'They may think a 'white Princess of Brunswick, Anspach, or Saxe Gotha 'superior to the daughter of the Duke of Richmond; it 'suits their interest and their understanding;' but he had hoped for better sense from his friend the Duke of Cumberland. Lord Bute, moreover, was not less opposed to the King's marriage to the sister of Lady Caroline, fearing the influence which such a connexion would bring to so ambitious and powerful a statesman as Henry Fox. The ambition of Henry Fox and the charms of Lady Sarah had therefore to contend with formidable opposition. Of the King's own disposition there seems to be no reason to doubt; but he was entirely surrounded by those who had more in view their own ends than the King's happiness. According to Horace Walpole, Fox played the game with much skill, absenting himself in the country whilst Lady Sarah was left at Holland House, 'where she appeared every morning in a 'field close to the great road (where the King passed on 'horseback), in a fancied habit, making hay.' This may be, as suggested by the Editors of the 'Life and Letters,' a bit of fancy on Walpole's part; but it is quite clear from the lady's bright and amusing letter to her friend, of June 19, 1761, that the King would not have been snubbed by her a second time. But, alas! 'to-day is come to nothing, for 'we were so near Lady Susan Stuart and Princess Augusta 'that nothing could be said, and they wacht us as a cat 'does a mouse; but looks and smiles very, very gracious; 'however, I go with the Duchess Thursday. I'll put a 'postscript in this of it. I beg you won't show this to any- 'body, so pray burn it, for I can tell you things that I can't 'tell other people you know. Adieu, dear Suke.' The postscript comes—'I went Thursday, but nothing was said; 'I won't go jigetting for ever, if I hear nothing, I can tell 'him.'

But she did hear nothing! Time went on. They met often, but nothing to the purpose was said. At the Birthday Ball the King's attentions had been manifest to everyone, and they were even continued after he had

privately yielded to the pressure of his *entourage*, and contracted himself to Princess Charlotte of Mecklenburg, an engagement announced at a meeting of the Privy Council on July 8. The day before, Lady Sarah writes the astounding news to her friend. The King had said nothing definite to her—

‘But though nothing was said he always took pains to show me some preference by talking twice, and mighty kind speeches and looks; even last Thursday, the day after the orders had come out, the hippocrite had the face to come up and speak to me with all the good humour in the world, and seemed to want to speak to me, but was afraid. . . . I shall go Thursday se’nnight; I shall take care to shew I am not mortified to anybody; but if it is true one can vex anybody with a reserved cold manner he shall have it, I promise him.’

Lady Sarah’s pride was naturally hurt in finding that latterly, at least, the King had merely been amusing himself at her expense; but it is clear that Henry Fox and Lady Caroline took more deeply to heart the failure of their ambitious plans. The King’s feelings would appear, on the whole, to have been more really touched than the lady’s; and the latter found much immediate consolation in tending her sick squirrel, whose death, in spite of the most careful nursing, gave her, according to Lord Holland, ‘more concern than H.M. ever did.’ In spite of the advice of her deeply annoyed elders she consented to be one of the bridesmaids at the King’s marriage. They are described by Horace Walpole, writing September 9, 1761, as ‘beautiful figures, especially Lady Caroline Russell, Lady Sarah Lennox, and Lady Elizabeth Keppel. With neither features nor air Lady Sarah was by far the chief angel.’ Her letters to her friend show her determination to make herself as little as possible the subject of pitying comment and sympathy, and her time passed gaily enough till her girlhood came to an end, in May, 1762, with her marriage to Charles, the eldest son of Sir William Bunbury, whom he succeeded in the baronetcy the following year.

Her husband was devoted to sport. He was the owner of Diomed, the winner of the first Derby; and as his country place was at no great distance from Newmarket it is natural that his wife’s letters should show the interest they both took in the racing, coursing, and hunting which occupied so much of their time in the country. For a time her tastes led her to prefer life at Barton and country pursuits to the racket of London or the turmoil of politics. Her

brother-in-law, Henry Fox, who at Lord Bute's request had just undertaken the lead of the House of Commons in order to carry the peace, 'is a goose to prefer the hurry and 'bustle of this new place to his own nonsensical quiet life.' She had been anxious that her husband should get the Irish Secretaryship, but the difficulties in the way disheartened her. 'As to politics,' she writes in another letter, 'I have renounced them and their vanities, for 'tis 'only wishing for what one can't have, and expecting what 'one don't get.' It is natural that she was 'for the peace,' however little her correspondent, Lady Susan, might agree with her.

Lady Susan was a couple of years senior to Lady Sarah, their respective ages being at this time (1764) twenty-one and nineteen; and much good advice did each of them receive from the other, without, so far as appears, any effect whatever being produced on either. At the private theatricals which were a frequent amusement at Holland House, Lady Susan had become acquainted with a good-looking young Irishman, an actor by profession, of the name of O'Brien. Thinking correctly that the Ilchesters and Holland House would absolutely decline to sanction such a *mésalliance*, the two took the matter into their own hands, met by arrangement, drove in a hackney coach to Covent Garden Church, were married there, and went on to his villa at Dunstable, whence she informed her parents of the step she had taken. It was long before her family forgave her. Lord Ilchester would give her no allowance, but Lord Holland, who, whatever his faults, was the kindest of men and much beloved by his relations, gave his niece 400*l.* a year and helped to put her husband in the way of finding employment abroad. Lady Sarah, three days after the marriage, though condemning her conduct, assures her she may still expect great happiness, 'and don't, my dear, give way to low spirits; not 'only yours but your husband's happiness depends so much 'on that that you must get the better of yourself, and if 'you are inclined to be cheerful never think it wrong in 'your situation, for, as I told you, your whole business is to 'please him.' As for want of money, Lady Sarah, who up to that time had never known what it was to be poor, felt that she herself could be perfectly happy on 200*l.* a year, and her only uneasiness would be the thought that such poverty might vex Mr. Bunbury and her own vanity. Lady Susan, it is quite clear, did not take kindly to the habits of frugality that her new circumstances required; and she

felt no little indignation at the disinclination of her own justly offended relations to provide her with what she considered a proper income. Her friend was in the unhappy position of seeing faults on both sides, and she spent much eloquence in trying to persuade each to make some allowance for the offended *amour propre* of the other. The O'Briens went to New York in search of a profitable opening in the colony. Their 'necessary expenses' were considerable. They made no money; and the expenditure which they thought indicated a life of economy struck Lady Susan's family as highly extravagant. The points of view were irreconcilable. Strained relations, if not war, were inevitable, and good advice from a neutral, however sympathetic, became exasperating. Lady Sarah bravely did her best.

'It is sad,' she writes to Lady Susan, that 'you found New York so bad, but it's an ill wind that blows nobody good, for the worse the town and the vulgarer the folks the less occasion you have for expense, and what is nothing to you will make you live "en Reine" there, so don't introduce anything finer than you need, for you may yourself set the fashion, and 'tis your own fault if 'tis an extravagant one.'

Keep up your spirits and live cheap is the admirable advice regularly exported from Barton to New York, whilst the advice imported from New York to Barton is to beware of a love of admiration, and to cultivate prudence. Lady Sarah frankly recognises that there is something to be said for a larger home consumption of this valuable article of their commerce.

'It's ridiculous,' she writes (February 7, 1765), 'in you and I giving one another the same advice, tho' upon different subjects; however, I think it plainly proves how much we both want it, and that it's only one's own partiality to oneself that prevents one saying the very thing to ourselves, not that, but, believe me, I have thought it, and am as much displeased at my giddiness as anybody can be; but I flatter myself that with a little attention I shall have no reason to be angry with myself on this same subject, for I have *thought* very seriously lately, and I don't see why I should behave like a *silly vain fool* when I am not one. You see I commend myself, but really I may say so much when at the same time I own that my sense is of no use to me; I am ashamed to own it, and I think it so wrong that I do firmly intend to be more exact in my behaviour.'

And so the two went on, persisting in their own ways: Lady Susan grumbling over her grievances, and scoffing at advice 'to save money and make an independent fortune 'out of 200*l.* a year'; Lady Sarah conducting herself, we are afraid, in a manner 'far from 'exact,' till four years

later the crash came, to be followed by years of withdrawal from her old surroundings, and then a second marriage—the starting-point of a new and very different and much nobler life.

Lady Sarah's letters, however, contained, fortunately for her correspondent and for us, much besides advice. Social gossip from London, description of the fashions, accounts of a couple of visits to Paris, allusions to the passing politics of the day, made up great part of her communications to her friend in New York. During the years after the Peace of 1763 there was much social intercourse between Paris and London. In May 1765 Lady Holland took her two eldest sons, Stephen and Charles Fox, and her sisters, Lady Sarah and Lady Louisa, to visit the French capital. Never was anything so beautiful as Lord and Lady Hertford's new house, 'quite a pallace, even here where the stile of houses are charming, in general, in my opinion. 'Tis true they are inconvenient and dirty, but for one's own appartments they are delightful. In the first place, they are upon the ground floor; and have every one a garden (where there are horse-chesnuds for shade); the rooms are large, the windows immense and all down to the ground, the furniture very fine (if new), for there are commodoes even in our lodgings, and looking-glasses in every part of the room and very large ones. The houses are dirty and old, but I own I like the stile of them infinitely.' She was not much struck by the beauties, and she declared the music at the Opera was 'ridiculous,' though the dances and scenery exceeded anything she had ever seen. As for acting, her enthusiasm for Garrick was always so great that she had hardly any admiration left for anyone else. Of him, many years after, she wrote that she grieved for 'the rising generation who will never know what real good acting is,' and she looked upon it as a piece of great good luck that she was born in his time. The handsomest woman she met was the Duchesse de la Vallière, aged fifty-two, but still 'beautiful as an angel.' The Princess of Monaco, in Paris reckoned a great beauty, would in London be merely accounted a very pretty woman, though as regards figure she was 'the most perfect made of any woman in the world, I believe. She is the only lady who don't wear rouge, for all the rest daub themselves so horribly that it's shocking.'

The following year she writes that 'French dress is coming into fashion, tho' 'tis almost impossible to make

'the ladies understand that heads bigger than one's body are ugly.' Frenchmen and Frenchwomen are visiting London, just as Londoners are visiting Paris. There is a certain sense of incongruity in finding Madame de Boufflers at Newmarket and Jean-Jacques Rousseau in London and at the play, where, moreover, he desired to be placed so that he might not see the King, 'which, as Mrs. Greville says, 'is a *pauvreté* worthy a philosopher.' He wore 'a pellisse and fur cap,' saw very few people, and 'is to go and live 'at a farm in Wales, where he shall see nothing but mountains and wild goats. *Autre pauvreté.*' Lady Sarah was one of the few English much admired in Paris, which pleased her vanity not a little. 'You can't think how 'French I'm grown,' she writes to Lady Susan, who, it is easy to see, has not ceased her warnings. Lady Sarah, deservedly or not, has been blamed; 'but be assured, my 'dear Netty, that my morals are not spoilt by the French,' and so on. She certainly acted on the advice she so plentifully bestowed on her complaining friend whose 'melancholly letters' she found it difficult to understand. 'Being 'cheerful is not only one's interest and pleasure, but it's 'a right thing and one's duty toward God who never 'meant to make us miserable; if we make ourselves so, we 'frustrate his intentions.'

The letters in these volumes, written as they are to her most intimate friend, appear to indicate that her life is a happy one, that she delights in her country house, and is sincerely attached to her husband. However, things went very wrong, and we can hardly lay all the blame on 'the 'French'! How it all came about we are not told; but early in 1769 she left her husband's house in London with Lord William Gordon (brother of the notorious Lord George Gordon). They lived together for some months at Carol-side in Berwickshire; but then, at the urgent entreaties of her relations, she withdrew from his protection, and came to stay permanently at Goodwood with her brother, the Duke of Richmond, and the Duchess. Of this period we know only what the Editors tell us—viz., that Lady Sarah lived in complete retirement, occupied with the bringing up of her daughter (Lord William's child). There are no letters given from Lady Sarah to her friend from June 1768 to June 1775, and we are informed that none have been preserved. By this time Lady Susan had long returned from America, and was living with her husband at a house of Lady Ilchester's near Dorchester. Lady Susan's family

had not yet forgiven her. There was much spirit but very little 'meekness' in her disposition, and Lady Sarah's never-failing efforts to bring about hearty reconciliation did not meet with the success they deserved. There was a 'toss of Lady Susan's head' that her relatives seem to have found exceedingly exasperating—a gesture which is 'a great crime in many people's eyes, for it denotes contempt.'

Why Lady Sarah's divorce (a remedy which in those days existed only for the rich and influential) did not take place till 1776 we are not told. She then resumed her maiden name. The Editors inform us, on the authority of her sister's letters, that Sir Charles used to visit her, and was even anxious to remarry her, though her own letters in 1779 and 1780, describing their curious interview and their sentiments towards each other, do not suggest that a remarriage was ever seriously thought of.

The O'Briens, during their stay in New York, had evidently got to think well of our colonists, whilst Lady Sarah's original prejudices against the Americans only yielded slowly to her generally Whig sentiments. 'I suppose you are violent for your American friends,' she writes in July 1775. 'I hope they are good sort of people; but I don't love Presbyterians, and I love the English soldiers, so that at present I have a horror of those who use them ill beyond the laws of war, which *scalping* certainly is, and I don't believe a word of the soldiers doing more than they ought.' But in November 1776 she is thanking God she is not queen, for long before this she would have quarrelled with the King, 'and her head would have been off probably.' But if she had cared about him, and could not have prevented the war, 'she should certainly go mad to think a person she loved was the cause of so shameful a war.' A year later, again she writes of the 'poor Americans,' and of the horror of *our* employing the Indians; a remarkable change of opinion from August 1775, when she held that the 'Bostonians, being chiefly Presbyterians, and from the North of Ireland, are daily proved to be very very bad people, being quarrelsome, discontented, hypocritical, enthusiastic lying people.' Such men were sure to be rebellious and discontented in any circumstances, she maintained. On December 30, 1777, she holds a very different opinion. Lady Susan is complimented on her *prévoyance* in foreseeing the war many years before. 'Do you remember your rebellious letters to me from America ten years

'ago? . . . Without having any partiality for America, I grow a greater rebel every day upon principle, and cannot therefore wonder at your being so, who have so much cause for partiality.' It was not Lady Sarah only who had come to question the policy or the morality of the war against the Americans. The eyes of Englishmen were slowly opening to the gigantic errors of British statesmanship from the very commencement of our American troubles—errors which had at last involved us in a struggle from which in the end there was no escape but in the dismemberment of the Empire. In the autumn of 1778 very large numbers of her fellow-citizens had got to contemplate the struggle from a new standpoint. 'Though an American in my heart as to the cause, I cannot bear my poor countrymen should suffer, who are to the full as innocent as the Americans.' Her near connexion with Charles Fox and the Whigs naturally drew her more and more to that view of the American War which, owing in large part to the energy, ability, and splendid eloquence of the Whig leaders, was to become the prevailing one. She sighs over Burke's defeat at Bristol in 1780, thinking it little to the honour of his constituents; 'but it is true merchant-like, for they are so selfish, they cannot bear his principles of freedom should extend to anybody but themselves, and his wishing Ireland had free trade is his crime.'

The exchange of letters between the two ladies with which vol. ii. opens affords delightful reading. In the spring of 1781 Lady Sarah is occupied with more serious matter than the disruption of empire and free trade for Ireland. She has made up her mind to marry again; the man of her choice being Captain George Napier, the second son of the fifth Lord Napier, lately invalidated home from service in America. Her brother, the Duke of Richmond, and all her relations are in different degrees opposed to the match, but for the most part they bring themselves to accept in good part what Lady Sarah's firmness makes inevitable. Captain Napier had no money but his pay. He was a widower, with a child of five years old to support. Her means were no more than sufficient for herself and her own child, and it is little to be wondered at that the apparent imprudence of the match on both sides called forth all the dissuasive eloquence of which their friends were capable.

Lady Sarah's letter to Lady Susan only suffices to prove to the latter that the contemplated match is a love-match. 'I admire your tough *oak-like* mind,' writes the former,

‘but I avail myself of my own weakness, and at least take the good of it, since I have suffered by the bad of such a bending, pliant turn of mind.’ The prudent Lady Susan, who, it will be remembered, made a runaway match the day she came of age, could hardly believe her own eyes when she read that her friend was going to marry for love a man without a shilling! Nothing could be more foolish, or more opposed to the welfare and future happiness of Lady Sarah herself and her daughter. The latter would suffer by her necessary withdrawal from Goodwood, where the fondness for her of the Duke and Duchess of Richmond was of importance, and it was sure to be diminished by her living at a distance, ‘for we are all *animaux d’habitudes*.’ As for her being an oak, she feels much more like a willow, and a weeping one. In truth no two ladies were ever more determined to get their own way. Each recognises with amplefulness the excellent advice constantly tendered by the other—and then completely disregards it! Certainly Lady Sarah had seen enough of the world, good and bad, to know what she was about, to judge for herself, and to take her own fate in her hands. Assuredly, as she had declared in her younger days, ‘she was no fool.’ The marriage took place at Goodwood in August 1781, and, in spite of all predictions to the contrary, proved a brilliant success. Neither Lady Sarah nor George Napier, however difficult their circumstances at times may have been, ever regretted the step they had taken, and their country has had much reason to congratulate itself on the results of their union, for amongst their children were General Sir Charles Napier, conqueror of Scinde, General Sir George Napier, who with his two brothers served through the Peninsular War, losing his arm at Ciudad Rodrigo, and General Sir William Napier, the historian of the Peninsular War.

The character of the letters now of necessity undergoes a change. Domestic duties and events claim a large share of attention, and, as years advance, the constant illnesses and the inevitable gaps in the circle of friends, and of friends’ friends bring home to Lady Sarah more serious thoughts, and call out in her the deep sympathy of her nature. It was now her lot to have to put in practice the advice she had always given to her friends. Far from complaining at the loss of the brilliant life and society of her younger days, she felt herself far happier, she writes in 1798, than

in the thoughtless giddy years that followed her childhood. She with her husband and children lived for some time at her sister's, Lady Louisa Conolly's, place, near Dublin, where they built themselves a small house. They had income enough to clothe and feed themselves and the nine children, and to send the boys to the village school. But the future had its anxieties, the parents had nothing to leave behind them, and when the war broke out her husband, who was devoted to his profession, with the full approval of his wife, eagerly sought employment on active service. The following year, therefore, they are found in cheap lodgings in Southampton, where Major Napier is busily employed in the work of recruiting till he joins Lord Moira's army in the Low Countries as Deputy-Quarter-master-General. She has been converted, she says, to his way of thinking about soldiering, 'and, tho' it must be in 'perpetual sacrifices of my own peace and happiness, I am 'convinced that a *true military man* (of which I see very 'few) will never bring about any pecuniary advantage to 'himself or his family, but in *that* line to which they have 'devoted all their abilities.' He could not, in short, limit his aspirations for himself and his family to seeing them comfortably off; and 'his passion for the army has decided 'that our five sons are to serve their country and to take 'their chance like him for fortune. I confess the perspective is *dark to me*, for, as I fear none of them will equal 'him in talents . . . I have little hope that they will even 'earn their bread, much less gain a sufficiency.' Happily she lived to see her husband's views justified, by the brilliant services rendered to their country and the distinction won by their sons.

As in the American War, so in the political troubles which followed the fall of Lord North, in the Irish difficulties, and in the French War of 1793 onwards, Lady Sarah was a true 'Foxite.' The references to Charles Fox, her sister's son, are very frequent." He was four or five years her junior, and at Holland House they had played together as children. They had acted together in 'Jane Shore,' and on other occasions. We hear of him at Eton, 'where he had made some Latin verses which were 'sent up for good.' When he was about seventeen Lady Sarah flattered herself she had great influence over him and was 'getting him into order.' That was no easy task, and when, long afterwards, the Coalition Government was

formed in 1783, and Charles Fox became Secretary of State, she admits that—

‘nothing short of supernatural power could make Charles *the guide* of administration, in spite of all the pains he takes to *marr* the genius that Providence gave him. I am so far from thinking he seeks greatness, that I am sure greatness pursues him into gaining honour, &c., &c., and since the Fates have decreed him to be Minister, can he avoid it? You will see he will never keep it; but it will always come back to him.’

During their stay in Ireland Lady Sarah and her husband, closely connected as they were with the Duke of Leinster and the Whigs, held the Opposition view that the Government *wished* to drive the Irish into extremes and so pave the way for a Union. In 1793 Charles Fox stands out in her eyes ‘more glorious than ever.’ She sees in him the vindicator of high political principle, who, in utter disregard of his own interest, sacrifices all prospect of place and power. She, and her husband no less strongly, were enthusiastically in favour of the Catholic claims and of a reform of the very corrupt system of Irish administration. Her vehemence against both the English and the Irish Government became intensified five years later on the imprisonment of her nephew, Lord Edward Fitzgerald, on a charge of high treason. An account of his death in prison, taken from the Holland House MSS., is given in the Appendix; but though the great charm of his character is dwelt upon there is nothing added to our knowledge of that misguided individual, or of the events of that lamentable time. It was natural that she should have seen in Lord Fitzwilliam’s policy towards the Catholics in 1795 the best hope for the peace of Ireland, and we can understand from her state of feeling the general despair amongst reformers caused by his recall. It is impossible to blame her when some three years later she writes that, though there is no more loyal subject of the King, ‘I do averr, and ‘shall never alter my opinion, that it is not the way to save ‘a kingdom by corrupting its Parliament.’ Pitt, however, had at the end of the eighteenth century, for the immediate safety of the whole kingdom, to keep a firm grip over the supreme executive authority in both countries. The more the Irish Parliament became representative of the Irish people as a whole rather than of the Anglo-Irish section of the community, the more it became necessary to have recourse to influence of all sorts in order that the supreme Government might retain the support of the two Parliaments. Pitt

may have seen, what Lady Sarah and her friends did not see, that the best chance of suppressing the corruption which was eating into the Government of Ireland, as well as of meeting the immediate national danger of the time, lay in the union of the Parliaments of England and Ireland. The continued existence of a separate and democratic Irish Parliament, whose concurrence on matters of national policy with the Parliament at Westminster it would always be essential to secure, might have seemed to far-sighted statesmen of those days to involve as a consequence the employment of all those acts of management for which Lady Sarah had so just a contempt. There was much in the way the Union was brought about that deserves censure. Nevertheless, in the main, the more we contemplate the possibility at the end of last century of any alternative to the Union policy of Pitt, the more we become convinced of its essential wisdom.

Lady Sarah could not stand Lord Castlereagh or Lord Clare; but the humane spirit and firm moderation of Lord Cornwallis at a time when too many loyal men could see no safety but in violence, appealed to her; and Colonel Napier, when it had been ascertained that no 'dirty Ministers' had anything to do with recommending him, accepted a military appointment under the Lord Lieutenant. The last three years of the eighteenth century in Ireland were enough to drive honest and liberal-minded people like the Napiers almost to despair. The state of the country in March 1799 is graphically described by Lady Sarah:—

'Robbers come to the farmers under the name of *United Gentlemen*, ask for food, drink, and horses, and leave word that if he don't send the army after them he shall never be touched; if he *does* give information his corn, hay, and cattle, &c., is destroyed. If he complains to them, they say, "Can't you hold your tongue? We don't want you to fight for us, only be easy." The poor wretch is violent. Then comes the furious Loyalist, who puts the poor farmer in jail because he was robbed. The man remonstrates and says, "Give me soldiers, give me arms, and I won't let the villains rob me." "No, no," says the Loyalist, "you are a d—d rebel, and shall have no protection; sell your land and go out of the kingdom." "With all my heart," says the farmer, "for I lead the life of a dog between you both, but find me a purchaser for my land." "We can't do that, it will soon belong to Government without purchase." What is the poor farmer to do? "Why," he says, "since this is to be the case that my ruin is evident, I had best make friends on the strongest side, and fight for it." Then he unwillingly turns rebel, who would have been a *faithful* subject had Government protected him well. Lord

Cornwallis sees all these evils and endeavours to remedy them, but he must first give honesty, humanity, and sense to the country gentlemen, magistrates, and colonels of militia of the kingdom of Ireland, and that's no easy task.'

Colonel Napier died in 1804, and a year afterwards Lady Sarah received a pension for herself and her daughters from the King, which Mr. Pitt was instrumental in getting for her. For a time she lived in London, to her no small astonishment seeing more of 'Pittites' than 'Foxites,' and laughing in her sleeve at their 'brags.' When Charles Fox returned to office for the last time, in 1806, his remaining months of life must have been rendered burdensome by the solicitations for place of his extremely numerous friends. The many references to Charles Fox in these letters afford fresh evidence of the enthusiastic attachment and admiration which his personal friends felt for him in spite of faults and failings to which they were not blind. An account of his last days, and of his death at Chiswick, is given in the Appendix to vol. ii., taken from the diary kept by his widow, and still preserved at Holland House.

Lady Sarah's later years were darkened by her blindness. But she maintained, till quite near the close of her life, her bright spirits and her keen interest in what was happening around her. She continued to dictate letters to Lady Susan, of which the last given is dated 1817. Unlike her friend, she did not think the new generation much worse than the preceding one, nor, indeed, that there was very much change except in hours and in dress and in the manner in which unmarried women were beginning to 'take a kind 'of lead even in their parents' houses.' She survived King George III. by some half-a-dozen years, dying in London in 1826.

Throughout, these letters are written with a freshness and spontaneity that captivate the reader, and help him to realise the singular charm for which Lady Sarah, in her own day, was famous. They have been admirably edited by Lady Ilchester and Lord Stavordale, who have done much in footnotes to recall to the casual reader the history of the time, and to make intelligible many of the allusions which without them it would have been very hard to interpret. Holland House holds a unique place in the history of England during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as the home of politics and letters and brilliant social life. These volumes are in every way worthy of Holland House.

- ART. III.—1. *Modern Abyssinia*. By AUGUSTUS B. WYLDE. London: Methuen. 1901.
2. *An Account of the English Mission to King Johannis of Abyssinia in 1887*. By GERALD H. PORTAL. Privately printed.
3. *With the Mission to Menelik, 1897*. By Count GLEICHEN. London: Arnold. 1898.
4. *Abyssinia: through the Lion-land to the Court of the Lion of Judah*. By HERBERT VIVIAN. London: Pearson. 1901.
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6. *Vers Fachoda: à la Rencontre de la Mission Marchand à travers l'Éthiopie*. Par CHARLES MICHEL, Second de la Mission. Paris: Plon. 1900.
7. *Ménelik et Nous*. Par HUGUES LE ROUX. Paris: Nilsson. 1902.
8. *Survey of the Sobat Region*. By Major H. H. AUSTIN, R.E., D.S.O. 'Geographical Journal,' May 1901.
9. *Surveys on the Proposed Sudan-Abyssinian Frontier*. By Major C. W. GWYNN, R.E., D.S.O. 'Geographical Journal,' December 1901.

ABYSSINIA is to-day one of the most interesting countries in the world for the student either of the past or of the present. On its throne sits an Emperor, who traces his descent, through such a pedigree as commonly makes the glory of half-civilised races, to another Menelik, born of the Queen of Sheba's visit to Solomon. At Axum, the traditional centre of Abyssinian religion, stand monuments, among the least explored in existence, which attest a civilisation perhaps of Balkis's day, and certainly offering resemblances to the Assyrian. A Semitic people keeps there the early Semitic institutions familiar to us from the Old Testament side by side with the most modern inventions—cities of refuge coexist with the telephone. The religion of the country presents the only example outside of Europe of a Christianity which has maintained itself as the national faith from a period too early to be definitely fixed; and it has been little studied. Even less investigation has been bestowed on the ancient speech, the Geez, preserved up to the present for

ceremonial uses. Philologist, archæologist, historian, theologian, all have a field almost virgin to explore. But the interest of the present eclipses the interest of the past. Where fifty years ago the Christian kingdom of Abyssinia lay almost inaccessible—shattered into a group of disconnected feudal states, split into two portions, each ringed about with fierce savages, and continually encroached upon and threatened with entire extinction—there Menelik to-day is absolute monarch of an empire which alone among the darker peoples has defeated a great European Power; with the diplomatic representatives of four great nations rivalling each other in courtesies, and intriguing for his friendship. Abyssinia may yet come to be the Penelope among her suitors, but for the moment the suitors are in the stage of contending with gifts. There is no intention here to attempt prophecy; but nothing can be more certain than that the destiny of Abyssinia will have its important effect on European diplomacy, and the purpose of this review is to give a coherent account (not easily accessible elsewhere) of the events, too little known in their sequence, which have brought about this transformation, and to deduce a few obvious inferences.

The first important factor in the situation had developed itself some centuries before Abyssinia was to Europe more than the fabulous country of some vague Prester John. Its people were no doubt from the earliest times in intercourse with the countries across the Red Sea. Mahomet, early in his career, sent his relatives for protection to the Christian ruler of Axum, which lies some 120 miles south-west of Massowah, the country's natural outlet on the Red Sea. They were well treated, and perhaps traditional gratitude saved Abyssinia from the early rush of Moslem conquest. But gradually the seaboard was taken, and in the fifteenth century only the arrival of adventurous Portuguese allies saved this outlying fragment of Christendom from conquest by Mohammed Grayn. With Portuguese help its people held their mountain passes against the invaders, but the coast remained in other hands, and Abyssinia was through five centuries a country debarred free access to the highway of nations. She is so still; but what Consul Plowden, writing in 1849, called 'the fatal barrier of Turkish domination' interposed between her and the sea only a blank wall. That barrier altered its character when, in 1882, Italy took the first step to establish herself on the Red Sea littoral, when France settled at Djibouti, and, lastly, when Egypt evacuated the Sudan. Abyssinia then came into direct contact

with living forces which she must either repel or submit to, and which in any case she must in some way assimilate and draw into her constitution if she was not to be drawn into theirs. Had the movement of events been a little quicker, Abyssinia must have been annexed almost without a struggle. In 1868 we advanced without difficulty to Magdala. But sixteen years later, when the Egyptian power finally broke up and left the Red Sea coast open to all ambitions, Abyssinia had already been welded into a very considerable power. Moreover, in the fact that this inland kingdom found its outlets to the sea held not by one nation but by three, lay a very great source of strength. Neither France nor Italy was willing to see Abyssinia annexed by a rival, and either of the two would supply Abyssinia with the means of defence against the other. As for England, if she had a policy in regard to Abyssinia, it was to abstain severely from action, whether in breach or in fulfilment of her obligations. Thus Abyssinia overpassed successfully the critical moment when her barbarism first jostled with a civilised Power, and, not having been crushed, has gained in a decade more strength from the contact than she could have done in a century of isolation. It is not too much to say that these last fifteen years have virtually, though not actually, given Abyssinia access to the sea and to the world's markets. She has been able to buy rifles—the material condition of national existence—in what quantity she chooses.

The second factor is the growth of a strong central monarchy, and it is, perhaps, reasonable to trace that also to the breaking down of this same 'fatal barrier.' The English expedition that defeated Theodore furnished the prince whom Lord Napier chose for the vacant throne with a good supply of arms; and, from that day to this, progress has been continuous, and Abyssinia has never looked back. Yet even before that day civilising influences had begun to filter through, and the country had shown itself able to produce a ruler. Abyssinia still offers to us the type of a feudal state, with its king paramount, the Negus Negusti, its lesser kings and Rases, who are to the Negus what the great dukes and counts were to the King of France, and with its hierarchy of lesser nobles. So Bruce saw and described it about 1770. But not long after his visit, the central monarchy, which had its seat at Gondar, was overthrown by Ras Michael of Tigré, the north-eastern province, and there ensued a long period of internecine war such as we find occurring in the

history of all feudal systems. About 1840 Europe began to extend diplomatic feelers towards this little known country, and at that time the King of Shoa, Sahela Selassié (grandfather of Menelik), was the chief potentate. Envoys were sent to him from the Government of India (Major Harris), and from Louis Philippe (M. Rochet d'Héricourt), but no permanent channel of intercourse was established, till in 1848 Mr. Walter Plowden, a traveller who visited Massowah, persuaded Lord Palmerston to appoint him as Consul to Abyssinia, with a residence at Massowah. The circumstance which originally suggested the scheme to Plowden was the presence in Abyssinia of an Englishman, Mr. Bell, who had married a chief's daughter and acquired considerable influence.

The country was then split into three main divisions: Shoa, the southern kingdom, under Sahela Selassié; Tigré and Semien in the north, under Dejjamatch Ubié; and Amhara, the centre of Abyssinia proper, under Ras Ali, to whom Bell was attached, and to whom Plowden also addressed himself. Ubié, though theoretically a vassal of the Ras, as his title Dejjamatch implies, was in reality an independent sovereign, and a neighbour as dangerous as was the Duke of Burgundy to Louis XI. The King of Shoa, though he called himself 'King of the Gallas,' was continually hard set to keep in check these tribes of fierce Mahomedan swordsmen and spearmen, and a tract of territory wholly occupied by them intervened between his dominions and those of the other Christian rulers in northern and central Abyssinia. In each of the kingdoms or provinces the supreme ruler occupied the position once held throughout the whole realm by the Emperor: 'He was the fountain of honour, every great officer of the household had a title, and with that title a particular province or district.' But, Plowden added in his first reports, 'since the divisions of the kingdom have taken place, the Abyssinians themselves have found it impossible to preserve the rules, and have neglected or forgotten the scrupulous ceremonies of the Court of Gondar. While the lances of the Gallas have robbed Abyssinia of its fairest provinces their manners and customs are superseding all its ancient institutions.'

Ras Ali himself was the grandson of a Galla adventurer, who in the confusion that followed the overthrow of the Emperor had carved out for himself a principality, and been recognised by the ruler of Gondar, though not until he had accepted Christianity. In 1849 when Plowden wrote

his first long despatch, Ali was recognised as lord paramount throughout northern Abyssinia, even Ubié paying tribute and furnishing his quota of troops on demand. One vassal, however, the chief of Gojam, held out in an impregnable fortress; and, moreover, trouble was brewing in the north-west, in the region bordering on the Egyptian province of Sennaar, where a chief named Kasai was gaining ascendancy, and disciplining troops into a force more regular than any of the loose Abyssinian levies. Finally, about 1852, Kasai broke into open revolt, and defeated first the Tigréan troops sent against him under Ubié, and then the whole force of Amhara under Ras Ali in person. Ali was obliged to withdraw to his own territory, evacuating Gojam, and thus liberating the beleaguered chief, whom Kasai shortly afterwards pursued, defeated, and captured, having secured himself against attack from the east by an alliance with Ubié. Once his hands were free, however, he turned on this enemy, and marched into Semien, the southern part of Ubié's territory; by rapid movements surprised and routed the Tigréan army, and captured his rival; proceeded to reduce rapidly all his strongholds; and then, declaring himself monarch, caused himself to be consecrated by the Aboona, or patriarch of Abyssinia, under the style of Theodorus, Negus Negusti (King of Kings) of Ethiopia. It was the revival of the empire, though the man who revived it was an adventurer—a brigand chief of low origin, but a ruler beyond doubt. Hardly a week after his coronation he was on the march, with the Tigréan army added to his own, against some Mahommedan Gallas who, in the confusion of these civil wars, had raided the south-eastern country and burnt churches. He was on this expedition when Plowden, joining him, fell as strongly under the new king's influence as Bell had already done.

There is no space here to go into bygone history, but certain things should be emphasised. First, that Theodore appeared to Plowden no barbarian.

‘He has hitherto exercised the utmost clemency towards the vanquished, treating them rather as his friends than his enemies. His faith is signal; without Christ, he says, I am nothing; if He has destined me to purify and reform this distracted kingdom, with His aid who shall stay me? . . . He has begun to reform even the dress of Abyssinia, all about his person wearing loose-flowing trousers and upper and under vests, instead of the half-naked costume introduced by the Gallas. Married himself at the altar and strictly continent, he has ordered and persuaded all who love him to follow his example,

and exacts the greatest decency of manners and conversation. This system he hopes to extend to all classes.*

“He has suppressed the slave trade in all its phases, save that the slaves already bought may be sold to such Christians as buy them for charity.” Setting the example, he pays to “the Mussulman dealers what price they please to ask for the slaves they bring to him, and then baptises them.”

Further, it was Theodore's object to supersede the feudal nobles, ‘more proud of their birth than of their monarch,’ by officers of his own; to reform the military system by the introduction of regular pay; to organise systematic taxation instead of the vexatious levies in every chief's province or district; and to bring the peasantry back to peaceful agriculture. His dreams of conquest aimed at a restoration of the ancient Abyssinia, reaching from the Red Sea to the Nile and Khartoum; and to carry them out he relied on no external aid. Ignorant as he was, and ignorantly arrogant, he nevertheless had certain sound ideas. ‘I know,’ he said to M. Lejean, French Consul at Gondar, ‘the tactics of European Governments. When they wish to take possession of an Eastern territory, they first of all send missionaries, then Consuls to strengthen the missionaries, and finally battalions to back up the Consuls. I am no rajah of Hindustan to be bamboozled in that manner. I prefer to deal with the battalions first.’ Consequently his first act was to expel the Roman Catholic missionaries (after perusing the history of the Jesuit missions in Abyssinia in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries); and Plowden's claim to be regarded as a Consul was entertained with extreme suspicion as introducing a foreign jurisdiction. The King was, however, anxious to send ambassadors to England, and Plowden strongly backed this proposal, though nothing came of it.

In short, the first years of Theodore's reign recall strongly the *quinquennium Neronis*. He made himself paramount over all Abyssinia, and by the consent of European witnesses his influence was in every way for good. Plowden, who remained in an official or semi-official capacity, was devoted to him; and Mr. Bell, once a British naval officer, who had transferred his allegiance from the defeated Ras Ali, held a place among the four personal retainers who dressed like the king in battle, and slept across his door at night. These

* In these matters a comparison of the later accounts of travellers with the earlier will show that a very great advance has been made, if not in morality at least in decency.

two men, but especially Bell, exercised a strong restraining influence on the king's violent temper, which soon began to be tested by the inevitable outbreak of rebellion in various parts of his newly-won kingdom; and by great ill-luck the same mischance removed both advisers. Early in 1860 Plowden, on his way to Massowah with a small escort, was attacked, wounded, and taken prisoner by Gerred, a rebel chief. Theodore instantly ransomed him at a high price, but he died of his wounds. Then the work of vengeance began, and Bell, accompanying Theodore, killed Gerred with his own hand, but was at the same instant cut down by Gerred's brother. The king made a bloody offering of the defeated force, but it could not bring back the dead; and this only inaugurated a period of vindictive and cruel chastisement. The *quinquennium Neronis* was over, and Nero's later days were beginning, though Theodore was at his worst cruel, but never contemptible. Yet mortified vanity, perhaps as much as violent temper, was the cause of the act which led eventually to his ruin.

In 1862 Captain Cameron was sent by Government to take the place of Plowden as Consul, and towards the end of the year Theodore wrote letters to the Emperor of the French and the Queen of Great Britain. His letter to the Queen, received in February 1863, remained unanswered, and the next news from Abyssinia (May 1864) was to the effect that two British missionaries, Messrs. Stern and Rosenthal, had been thrown into chains and beaten. There is no need to go minutely into the detail of a business once familiar enough. Theodore had been induced in 1855 to admit the Basle missionaries because they promised to bring artisans, and various other representatives of Protestant societies had followed in their track without hindrance. Mr. Stern reached Abyssinia in 1860, and travelled through it for three years, receiving nothing but kindness. In September 1863, when Theodore was beginning to chafe because his letter to the Queen received no answer, the consular mail from Gondar to Massowah was seized; and it seems clear that in it were found letters from Stern and Rosenthal criticising Theodore's conduct and position. At all events from this date began their misfortune. When Cameron as Consul attempted to intervene, he was met with an inquiry for proofs of the friendship between Abyssinia and England. Where, in a word, was the answer to Theodore's proffer of alliance? In November 1863 letters came from England, but bringing no acknowledgement to

the Negus. There was merely an official note to the Consul ordering him to Massowah. As Cameron was then virtually a prisoner in Theodore's camp, the packet went straight to the king and filled him with fury. Louis Napoleon's answer, written by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, had contained a lecture which incensed him; but this absolute disregard put him beside himself. The Consul was chained with the others. There followed three years of attempts to recover the captives without recourse to armed force—a delay not creditable, yet, as it proved, not inexpedient, for the usurper's kingdom was falling to pieces; and when an expedition landed there was virtually no opposition. Theodore blew out his brains as our men entered Magdala, and so ended the career of a great adventurer. His conceptions were not only ambitious, they were honourable, and for a time at least he realised his dream of a united Abyssinia. And, it must be noted, his attempt to organise a nation was the less chimerical, because the Abyssinians, however unable to resist the temptation to feudal jealousies and dissensions, had nevertheless the sense that they were a nation, and a great nation. National ambitions appealed readily to their minds. M. Le Roux, the latest and one of the best writers on their country, emphasises the fact that they alone among African races are affected by the conception of a *patrie*.

When the English withdrew from Magdala, taking with them Theodore's son Alamaya to be educated in England, Lord Napier installed on the throne the Prince of Tigré, a revolted vassal of Theodore's, who had furnished our troops with supplies and information. To establish him in his seat we bestowed upon him a good store of rifles and ammunition. His authority, however, was strictly limited by his military power, and in the confusion of our approach Menelik, son of the King of Shoa whom Theodore had deposed, had found means to escape from Magdala, had made his way south, and by 1869 had cut his way to his father's throne. Moreover, though England had gone out of the country without leaving so much as a representative to open a way for our trade, European ambitions were threatening the new ruler. France had thrown an eye on Abyssinia since the days of Louis Philippe, and now Munzinger, an intriguing Swiss, stationed at Massowah as Vice-Consul of England and France, induced a certain Ras Waldenkel, ruler of the Hamasen province (adjoining what was then the neutral ground between Abyssinian territory and the

Egyptian post at Massowah), to invite French protection. In 1869 an expedition was planned, but the events of 1870 gave France other cares, and Munzinger turned his thoughts to Egypt, where Ismail Pasha was then in full career of annexations and territorial extension. Munzinger was made Governor of Massowah, and promptly annexed the Bogos country, a little to the north, which had always paid tribute to Abyssinia, and contained Abyssinian churches. Fortifying the town of Keren, he secured for Egypt in this way a through route from Massowah to the central post of Kassala in the Eastern Sudan.

In the meanwhile, however, Napier's nominee had been improving his position with the strong hand, and, by 1872 having become master of all Northern Abyssinia, caused himself to be crowned and proclaimed King of Kings at Axum, with the name of Johannis. When Munzinger annexed the Bogos country King John was occupied in the South dealing with Menelik, whom he forced to tender submission in due form as a vassal. From his camp he wrote to Ismail Pasha, acquiescing in the annexation, but desiring that a frontier should be fixed on that basis and friendly relations established. Ismail's answer was to claim the Mareb River as a boundary. Terms, he said, could be arranged at Adowa, a town far into Abyssinian territory. Naturally this meant war. In 1875 an Egyptian army advanced to Gundet and was defeated with very heavy loss by Ras Aloula, John's governor in the North. On the same day another part of the same plan miscarried. Harar, on the south of Shoa, was then in Egyptian hands, and Munzinger had intrigued with Menelik and agreed to aid the Shoans in a blow from the south, while the Egyptian army invaded from the north. But on his way from the Bay of Tajurrah Munzinger was attacked by the Somalis, defeated, and killed. None the less the game went on, and in 1876 a second Egyptian army advanced to capture Adowa and secure the Mareb as frontier, and for a second time was defeated, at Gura, and driven back with heavy loss by the Abyssinians under King John. Mr. Wylde, the best, and indeed almost the only, authority on this period of Abyssinian history, estimates the Egyptian loss in the two campaigns at 20,000 men, with the stores, artillery, and equipment of both armies. No peace was made, but substantially King John found his hands free, and immediately turned on Menelik, who had co-operated with Egypt by an attack from the south. Menelik was quickly reduced to submission, and went through the public

ceremony of setting his neck under the foot of his overlord. On these terms he was recognised formally, and crowned by John as King of Shoa; and a diplomatic marriage was celebrated between his daughter and John's son, Ras Areya. Thus from the battle of Gura in 1876 Abyssinia entered on a period of peace which lasted for eight years, disturbed only through frontier incidents. Attempts were made by Gordon, then Governor-General of the Sudan, to conclude a treaty and settle the frontier, and he offered terms in 1877 which were just, and were well received. But while the negotiation was in progress Gordon went to Khartoum, and the Egyptian Government did not abide by his terms, but loosed on the Hamasen its former ruler, Ras Waldenkel, who, having sided with the Egyptians in 1876, was now an exile in the Bogos country. Accordingly, when Gordon attempted to renew negotiations in 1879 with Ras Aloula, then governor and commander-in-chief in the North, he was ill received; the more so as Ras Aloula saw his way to put an end to Waldenkel's raids by seducing his army from him. The frontier, therefore, still remained unsettled, though there was peace until the end of 1883, when the troubles in Egypt and the Sudan were growing to their worst. The governors of Massowah and Keren were again sheltering rebel fugitives from Abyssinia and abetting their raids, and Ras Aloula's attitude was threatening. Mr. Wylde, sent down from Suakin with power, put a stop to this by arrest of the offenders, and in the spring of 1884 a mission under Admiral Hewett was sent up to treat with King John, and was admirably received.

England had put King John on the throne in 1868, had equipped him, and then left him to shift for himself. The position which he held as supreme in Abyssinia he had won for himself. Unhelped he had driven back the Egyptian armies, furnished though they were with modern weapons and officered by experienced European soldiers; and the original gratitude which he may be supposed to have felt to Great Britain had been given sixteen years to evaporate in. England now came to him to ask a service, for the evacuation of the Sudan had been decided, and we proposed that John should get out the garrisons. The dervishes under the Mahdi were his enemy as well as ours, and he was by no means unwilling. A treaty, signed at Adowa in June 1884, provided that King John should relieve the garrisons and give them free passage through Ethiopia, retaining the arms and munitions found in the

garrisoned towns. He was also to be reinstated in possession of the Bogos country. All of this was faithfully done on both sides, so far as was possible. Ras Aloula brought out the garisons of Amedeb, Algeden, and Keren on the northern frontier, and of Ghirra and Gallabat on the north-west. 'These five stations,' adds Mr. Wylde, 'were the 'only ones throughout the length and breadth of the Egyptian Sudan that did not fall into the hands of the Mahdi, 'Ras Aloula accomplishing what England with all her 'resources was unfortunately unable to perform with Singat 'and Toker situated within only a few miles of Suakin.' Kassala was less fortunate. Ras Aloula received instructions to relieve the place, and, according to Mr. Wylde, was anxious to start promptly in 1885, before the June rains began; but the Egyptian authorities delayed over negotiations, and he did not get orders to set out till September, when the place had already fallen. He marched, however, and met Osman Digna's army at Kufit, and after very heavy loss on both sides routed the dervishes completely, but Kassala was deserted when he entered it. The Abyssinians, however, had not spared their blood in fulfilling their compact, and when they failed the fault was not theirs.

It is a pity that the treaty was less well observed on our side. The first article in it ran as follows: 'From the date 'of signing there shall be free transit through Massowah to 'and from Abyssinia for all goods, including arms and 'ammunition, under British protection.' But the scramble for Africa was beginning, and in 1882 Italy had purchased from the Rubattino Company the little harbour of Assab, at the south of the Red Sea, which the company had acquired in 1869. Now, in 1885, with our consent, she replaced Egypt at Massowah, and not a finger was moved by us to secure to Abyssinia the rights guaranteed by our treaty of the preceding year. Thus our ally, King John, found himself menaced by the dervishes, his natural enemies, from the west and north-west, while to the south his old rival Menelik was intriguing with the new neighbour on the north, whose ambitions were unmistakable. Arms were freely supplied by Italy from Assab to Menelik without consulting his acknowledged suzerain. Further, the Italians began in 1887 to push out works into what had always been considered as the neutral ground between Massowah and the nearest Abyssinian frontier post. Ras Aloula, who was fully occupied in checking dervish raids along the northern provinces, protested strongly, and declared that any further

movement of troops towards Sahaati, the point fortified, would be regarded as a hostile action. The Italians replied by increasing the garrison, and Ras Aloula, suddenly moving from his own frontier, attacked and cut to pieces a body of 450 men on their way to Sahaati at a place called Dogali, inside the Italian zone. The Abyssinians, after their horrible custom, mutilated the dead, as Samson mutilated the Philistines, and feeling was fierce in Italy. An army was collected at Massowah, but for a variety of reasons European diplomacy was unwilling that Italy should embark in a transmarine war, and Mr. Gerald Portal was entrusted with a mission from the Queen to attempt to procure from King John an apology and a frontier treaty, involving considerable concessions. Mr. Portal, with great difficulty and no little risk, made his way across the belt of devastated country that divided the forces of the two angry nations, and when he reached Ras Aloula was in some danger of being dealt with as a spy. It is, however, not difficult to see that the feelings of an Abyssinian, and more particularly of Ras Aloula, who had lost a fourth of his men fighting in our quarrel at Kufit, can hardly have been friendly to any representative of England. The substance of the Abyssinian contention is expressed in the letter from King John which Mr. Portal took back to the Queen :

‘To say truth I have never done anything and have never committed any offence against you or against the Turks (*i.e.* Egyptians). When the treaty was signed between me and England and Egypt it was laid down that no arms were to pass Massowah except by my permission; but they have not complied with the treaty, but have passed weapons and sold them to the Shahis’ (hostile frontier tribes) ‘and then have made disturbances in my country. As for the complaints the Italians made that they had been badly treated, the fault was on their side, and they began the quarrel by stopping the Abyssinian merchants and by occupying Sahati and Wia and taking possession of them. Why did they stop the trade, and come into my country? I wrote to them: “If you have come with authority from the Queen, show me her signature, or if not leave the country.” And they answered me: “No, we will not.”’

The letter ends with a positive refusal to make peace till the Italians should withdraw to their original border. ‘The Italians desire war, but the strength is in Jesus Christ. Let them do as they will. So long as I live I will not hide myself from them in a hole.’

The King himself treated the embassy with courtesy, and if the general demeanour of the Abyssinians was far from

friendly is it to be wondered at? England had signed a treaty professing friendship and promising peace, and within twelve months had installed a formidable enemy on the Abyssinian border at a moment of national peril. For the dervishes were pressing hard in the west. In 1887 they attacked the western province of Gojam, defeated John's vassal King Tekla Haimanout, and looted the ancient capital Gondar. But in 1888 John had reinforced Tekla Haimanout with riflemen, so that the next incursion of the dervishes was driven back with loss; and the winter of that year was spent in preparation for carrying the war into their country. In March 1889 was fought the great battle at Metemneh, when about 70,000 Abyssinians attacked the entrenched dervishes. The Abyssinian rifles made havoc of the packed troops inside, but John himself, annoyed because one small redoubt still held good, went to attack it with his bodyguard and was mortally wounded. The redoubt was rushed and its defenders slaughtered, but the news of the King's wound spread and the battle checked. John was known to be dying, and dying without an heir, for his son had died in the thick of the Italian trouble. In his last moments the King acknowledged Ras Mangesha of Tigré as his son, though illegitimate; but John's death knocked the keystone out of the arch and the army scattered, quarrelling as to the succession and the division of plunder before the day was out. The King's uncle, Ras Areya, a very old man, was left with a troop to bring back the King's body; and this little band two days after the battle was overtaken by the dervishes and destroyed; the old Ras, refusing to fly, died over the coffin. So by a curious irony the head of a really great ruler went from his last victory into the hands of his enemies.

Menelik's opportunity had come. Since 1882, when the Italians had entered into negotiations with him, he had extended and consolidated his power over the Gallas, and in 1886 had defeated the Emir Abdullahi, whom we left after the evacuation to rule in Harar, perhaps the most important town in all the Abyssinian region. On receiving the news of John's death he proclaimed himself Negus Negusti, and Central Abyssinia at once submitted. Count Antonelli, the Italian Envoy, also saw his opportunity, and concluded the Ucciali Treaty, containing a clause which was afterwards interpreted as making Italy the intermediary between Abyssinia and any other Power, thus implying a protectorate. Menelik was crowned at Entotto in November

1893). (Mr. Wylde thinks that many Abyssinians disregard the ceremony unless performed at Axum, the traditional place of the rite.) In the meantime Italy, as the price of her support, had advanced, unopposed, and occupied the Bogos, Hamasen, and Oculu-cussei provinces, which they still hold—all of them provinces guaranteed to Abyssinia by our treaty of 1884. Menelik, however, was too fully occupied to protest; but so soon as the Italians attempted to claim a virtual protectorate and act as his intermediary with other Powers he at once resented the claim, and declared that he had been misled as to the wording of the treaty—in short, that the Italian version did not represent the Amharic. In any case war was inevitable: the Government of Eritrea was in the hands of ambitious soldiers. In 1890 they crossed the Mareb and captured Adowa—which unlucky town was looted three times in four years by the Italians or their native levies. In 1892 General Baratieri became governor of the province, and in 1893-94 successes against the dervishes led to an Italian occupation of Kassala. In 1895 Ras Mangesha's attempt to expel the invaders from Tigré resulted in his defeat at Senafe. Encouraged by this they pushed on, occupying Macalle, where stood King John's palace; and by the end of the year Italy held practically all Tigré, which includes the purest branch of the Abyssinian race. Then, however, the tide turned. Ras Makonnen, Governor of Harar, was sent to reinforce Mangesha, and defeated the Italians at Amba Alagi on December 7, 1895. They fell back on Macalle, and after a siege the garrison, mostly Abyssinian levies, marched out with honour, having given a pledge not to fight again, which, according to Mr. Wylde, was not respected. Menelik's artillery, procured from the French at Djibuti, outranged and outmatched that of the Italians. He himself was now marching north with the levies of the entire kingdom. Public opinion in Italy was excited at the news of these reverses, and the Ministry pressed for a political battle. General Baratieri rashly consented, and attacked on March 1, with about 14,000 troops against 90,000 to 100,000 Abyssinians, in difficult country. The result was the terrible defeat at Adowa. Mr. Wylde, the only English writer who knows anything of Northern Abyssinia, gives very full details of the battle, collected by him on the spot a couple of months later from a great variety of persons, Italian prisoners as well as Abyssinians; and some of his conclusions are noteworthy.

First, the Italians need not have fought. Menelik's army must have disbanded, for want of supplies, within a fortnight. Secondly, the result was by no means to increase the popularity of the conqueror in his own country. The secular enmity between North and South was intensified by the conduct of Menelik's Shoan soldiery, who looted coming and looted going, with the result, says Mr. Wylde, that 'the return south was one incessant skirmish between the cultivators and the strangers.' And, thirdly, since the policy of Italy has changed, and civil rule been substituted for military, Eritrea is making rapid progress, and the sight of order, prosperity, and moderate taxation across the border has its effect on the Tigréans, Amharans, and eastern tribesmen, who have no love for the southern monarch. Consequently, Italy can, without embarking on actual war, do grave harm to Abyssinia by easily fomenting rebellion. Her position is therefore not so materially weakened by her defeat as might readily be supposed.

There is no question, however, that Abyssinia's position was enormously strengthened by the news of Adowa, and there followed what Mr. Wylde calls 'an undignified rush' to enter into negotiations. The Russian Red Cross mission was already on the spot, and certainly not without a political character; but of the ostensibly political missions, first came the French under M. Lagarde, with a modest offering (as we learn from M. Michel) of 100,000 Lebel rifles and 2,000,000 cartridges. French politicians were already aiming at an access to the Nile, and the apparition of this new ally *in posse* at once suggested a grandiose project. In the end of 1896 it was decided to send the Clochette and Bonvalot de Bonchamps expeditions, and in January 1897 M. Lagarde was on his way to Addis Ababa to pave the way for them. Spain also sent a mission, in the interests of Roman Catholicism; and last of all came the English envoys under Mr. Rennell Rodd, who returned with a treaty, as Count Gleichen describes. A year was allowed to elapse before Captain Harrington was appointed as representative at Menelik's capital, and that interval was fully utilised by the French and Russians acting in close accord. But, as Captain Welby found when he reached Harar in the last days of September 1898, a very striking change was brought about by the news of the fall of Khartoum, carrying as it did the total defeat of the French scheme for trans-African dominion, and the establishment of England in a position which rendered

Abyssinia almost an enclave in British territory. The qualifying word 'almost,' however, is momentous. Even allowing—and it is more than can be safely assumed—that our interests can be reconciled with those of Italy, Djibuti is to Abyssinia what Delagoa Bay was to the Boers, and Djibuti is not in the hands of a power so malleable as Portugal.

A few sentences will summarise all that has actually happened since Adowa. Menelik at first drafted his army on to the south and south-west to continue the work of subjugating the Gallas and of looting the less civilised tribes who lie beyond the Gallas towards Lake Rudolf and towards the Nile valley. The Abyssinians, who for long had lived in terror of their neighbours, have for the last ten years, since France supplied them with rifles, had those neighbours at their mercy, and have dealt with them as the Israelites dealt with an enemy whom the Lord delivered into their hands. The result is that the Gallas have been reduced to the position of helots (in the Greek not the South African sense), while beyond the Gallas all human beings fly at the sight of any body of men who may, perhaps, prove to be the Habesha. The spectacle has excited the horror of all civilised travellers, but it is impossible not to agree with Captain Welby (whose expedition was reduced to great straits by this flight of all inhabitants) that one cannot reasonably blame a barbarous nation for misusing a power so suddenly thrust into their hands. M. Michel, relating his attempt to push down the Sobat and join Marchand, reports that the army of Dedjaz Tessama, ruler in the South-Western province, had received orders from Menelik to put an end to the work of devastation, and two members of his mission, who accompanied Tessama in 1898 to the bank of the White Nile, found that this order was observed. But on the way back a casual ambuscade brought about the death of M. Potter, one of the two Frenchmen, and Tessama laid the whole region waste as a penalty.

This expedition had for its purpose to plant the Abyssinian and French flags on the bank of the Nile, and it was done, but the claim which Menelik originally put forward to a boundary fixed on these lines has no reality. M. Michel admits that the Abyssinians had no serious intention of pushing to the White Nile. Their mountaineers cannot live in the swamps, and Tessama's march only added to their conviction of this fact, which Menelik has fully accepted. In 1899 two expeditions were sent out under English engineer officers, of which one was destined to survey the country

between Rosaires on the Blue Nile and the Sobat, thus skirting the west of the Abyssinian mountain escarpment, and the other the region between the Sobat and Lake Rudolf, thus exploring the southern and south-western borderland through which Captain Welby made his wonderful journey. The former expedition, under Major Gwynn, completed in 1899-1900 and the following winter a survey from Gallabat to Nasr on the Sobat; the other, under Major Austin, met with great difficulties, and the work is only in part accomplished. But each of the two was undertaken with Menelik's full consent, and the difficulties met with were only in countries which the Abyssinians had raided but not occupied. A frontier based on the surveys is now under discussion. On the east, the Italian, French, and British boundaries have all been arranged, at least conventionally.

Practically it seems clear that over all the border tribes the Abyssinians exercise an organised and effective rule as far south as Lake Stefanie, and west to Goré. This rule, no doubt horribly unjust, will probably improve. At present the curse of Abyssinia is by consent of all observers a swarming soldiery, ill paid and ill disciplined, who think it beneath them to work, and who seize any opportunity to loot the cultivator, be he Galla or Abyssinian. On the other hand, Mr. Wyldo says that the peasants, especially in the North, since they have got rifles, begin to defend themselves against these drones, and he foresees a day when a trial of strength may come between the peasantry and the feudal chiefs, the King perhaps siding with the people, and probably with the clergy also, to break the power of the barons. This revolution may be hastened in the North, where there is no standing army, by the growing prosperity and boldness of the cultivators, and in the South by the fixing of a frontier which will put a stop to the endless raiding—thus depriving the soldiers of the chance to plunder legitimately. It should, moreover, be observed that in some of the Galla and Shangalla districts Menelik has abstained from interference with the former state, recognising the chiefs and giving them Abyssinian titles.

So much by way of an historical review. Certain observations remain to be made. Practically there is an agreement of conjecture that no change is likely to come while Menelik lives, but that the country will grow in strength and prosperity under him. His death, however, may readily bring about a general break-up, and it is well to remember

that he has been a king for thirty-four years. But in speculating on such a catastrophe we are not influenced by the widely held belief that Menelik is a sort of *luxus naturæ*, on a wholly different plane of civilisation from his subjects. We have tried to show that he is merely the last in a series of three very remarkable rulers, each of whom has governed a united Abyssinia, and each of whom has been open to European ideas. Mr. Wyldé evidently thinks that Johanniss was a better king than his successor, and his admiration for Ras Aloula was equal to his admiration for Johanniss. That general, however, is removed from the scene, killed in a skirmish or brawl over some petty territorial dispute—an incident very characteristic of a feudal state. Since his death the leading northern chief is Ras Mangesha, John's bastard, whom Italy has shown signs of backing, but who is judged to be deficient in character and ability. No such objection lies against Ras Makonnen, the ruler of Harar, who is perhaps marked out as the successor by his recent marriage with a kinswoman of the Negus. There is no reason to suppose that Abyssinia cannot produce a worthy heir to Menelik, but it is certain that the heir can only secure his succession by war or by a show of overpowering force. Let us suppose, as is quite likely, that France backs Makonnen and Italy Mangesha, what will happen?

The European Powers can hardly allow uncontrolled civil war to break out in a country where their subjects have already acquired important interests in the way of concessions, and the result would probably be a partition under protectorates more or less avowed. That result can undoubtedly be avoided if the Powers combine to insist that Menelik shall nominate an heir,* and to guarantee that heir's succession. Now, for Abyssinia itself undoubtedly the main requisite is peace and a stable government. For all commercial interests peace is also essential; but it remains to be seen whether these will be considerable. Up to the present the various merchant adventurers, chiefly French, who have settled in Harar or in Menelik's capital, Addis

* M. Le Roux—whose book has a semi-official character since he went out at the invitation of M. Ilg, Menelik's foreign minister, and his had expenses defrayed by the French Government—asserts boldly that 'a successor has long been designated to the assembly of Rases, and that they have sworn fealty to him'; and that Menelik only keeps the matter secret lest he should lose in personal importance. It is safe to say that this represents what the French colonial party, and possibly Menelik also, would wish us to believe.

Ababa, have found themselves allowed to start a trade, but, once the trade started, have been brought into disastrous competition with a ruler who is himself a merchant. Menelik has the example of Japan close at heart, and is anxious to use the Europeans rather than be used by them. It seems probable also that the commerce of the country may be largely managed by Hindu traders, and that Hindu artisans, rather than French or English, will reap a harvest. There is, of course, the possibility of mining enterprise proving lucrative; but, on the whole, it is a question how far the commercial interest which demands peace and consolidation will prevail by its magnitude against the political, which may find its account in dissensions. The strength of a united Abyssinia has been shown; but it is an easy country to drive wedges into, North and South being ill welded. Italy, possessing a great supply of labourers eager to emigrate, must naturally desire to divert emigration to her own colony, and the northern provinces of Abyssinia have almost an Italian climate, and soil rich both for grain crops and pasturage. Mr. Wylde found the settlers already doing well in Eritrea, and Italy could not be unwilling to extend her border. She gained a province by helping Menelik to the throne; she might gain another by helping Mangesha.

On the other hand, France, by assisting Makonnen, might gain a footing where her unrelinquished ambitions in the Nile valley might some day grow dangerous. France has made great sacrifices (to use a phrase dear to her statesmen) in Abyssinia, and she has got no return from them, except in maintaining a possible means of annoying either Italy or England. If M. Le Roux is right in his suggestion that Abyssinia with the help of modern engineers can control the water supply of Egypt by works on the head waters of the Blue Nile, it is evident that Abyssinia may be a powerful lever in French hands, and still more evident that we cannot let the key of Egypt pass into her keeping. The action of her colonial party in forcing the Government (as it seems clear they have forced it) to prevent a British syndicate from obtaining something like control of the Harar-Djibuti railway shows how resolute the French policy is in that sphere. M. Michel's savage comment on the conduct of M. Lagarde, the French Envoy at Menelik's Court, may explain why France has been so far unsuccessful on the whole; but there is no doubt of her ambitions. One may dismiss the thought of a total annexation by any single Power; but a partition, either with or without

the name of protectorates, is very possible. Either France or Italy stands to gain by that; to England territory is no object. It seems to us, therefore, imperative for our Foreign Office to insist, in the general interest of European commerce and in the interest of Abyssinia itself, that Menelik should consolidate his work by naming a successor. Neither France nor Italy could avow any opposition to such a policy, and our urging it would be the strongest answer to the French intriguers, whose object it is to make the Negus believe that British schemes are directed to a total absorption of his kingdom.

The danger of strengthening an enemy on our border is real, but very much preferable to the alternative of loosing European ambitions in the Nile valley. Abyssinia is, no doubt, a strong military power, and an opinion like that of Mr. Vivian, who thinks that the country could be swept by our existing force of Sudanese and Egyptians, may be compared to the popular forecasts of the South African campaign. The Abyssinians can levy in very short time a large number of men, well armed, experienced in fighting, courageous, yet by no means disposed to advance over open ground like the dervishes to be mown down; lightly equipped infantry, capable of covering long distances at high speed, and with little food. These levies would be assisted by a country of which Mr. Wylde says significantly that he knows many ways into it, but none out. Altogether, a united Abyssinia must be very strong for defence, and any Abyssinian fighting must prove costly and dangerous. But when it comes to assuming the offensive these armies are scarcely formidable. The business of provisioning and keeping together a large body of men is not understood by their generals, and it is doubtful whether they would attack fortified positions held by disciplined troops. The populations whom we rule in the Sudan are the immemorial enemies of a Christian race which knows no tolerance for the Moslem, and proselytises at the sword's point. We say nothing of the old-fashioned and superseded prejudice in favour of maintaining the existence of independent nationalities. We would merely urge that the choice for this country is not between annexing Abyssinia at some future date and guaranteeing its independent existence. The probable alternative to maintaining the country as it is now is a partition which will set us jostling against at least one ambitious and energetic Power, and a partition only arrived at after an interval, longer or shorter, of dis-

agreeable and possibly disastrous civil war. We hold, therefore, that it should be the object of British policy—

(1) To get a frontier fixed, and effectively occupied at once, in order to prevent possible disputes, and to put a stop to the present deplorable condition of the debateable land which may readily extend unrest and disorder to our possessions in Uganda and on the White Nile;

(2) To secure a peaceful succession to a competent successor, and to avoid the unrest of a continued anticipation of civil strife; and

(3) To afford Menelik all possible assistance in the business of consolidating his kingdom by a better regulated system of taxation, and in dealing with the questions that must arise as European interests develop in the country.

In a word, we should do our best, and make it plain that we are doing our best, to help Abyssinia over the transition from barbarism to incipient civilisation. The French tendency to cry up the country and everyone belonging to it breeds in Englishmen an inclination in the opposite direction, and this inclination is increased by a variety of circumstances. The Abyssinians are not truthful, and they are arrogant—or, at least, they have none of the Oriental's submissiveness. Their oppression of the Gallas and their barbarous cruelty to the other tribes alienates all sympathy. Nevertheless, Mr. Wylde, who has really lived in close intercourse with them for many years, and is, we should say, a good observer (though a most ungrammatical writer), repeatedly defends the Abyssinian character. And if M. Le Roux be right in his statement that Menelik will regard with disfavour any attempt of foreigners to exploit minerals, but will welcome those who can take a hand in developing Abyssinia's agricultural resources, there should be an opening for a good many British subjects in a country where almost every kind of culture, from horse-breeding to coffee-planting, can be pursued under excellent conditions. It seems clear, moreover, that neither Italy nor England can look on idly for ever at an arrangement which will give France control of the only access by rail into a land of so much promise. According to M. Le Roux, Menelik signed in March 1894 a concession, running for ninety-nine years, to guarantee that no company should construct railways in Abyssinian territory which should compete with the line undertaken by M.M. Ilg and Chefneux. It is obvious that this covenant admits of widely varying construction, and we do not know to what extent the original concessionnaires retain an interest

in the enterprise or a control over it. But it may be assumed that M. Ilg, Menelik's chief adviser, a man whose integrity and judgement are praised on all hands, will be guided by his conception of what will serve his adopted country. He turned to France for help when help was not elsewhere forthcoming. That is no proof that he will desire to give France a perpetual preponderance in Abyssinian counsels, and our representatives unite in testifying to the good will which he has shown them.

For the moment, however, we have to recognise the fact that our prestige in Abyssinia rests mainly on the moral effects of a victory which more recent African warfare has sadly depreciated : whereas France has both by private and public effort really conferred great benefits on the country. Codlin cannot ever allow himself to be wholly eclipsed by Short. The French probably exaggerate the value of their line, which will, after all, merely bring the rail to the eastern base of the Abyssinian escarpment : it will not come within a day's journey of Harar, and Harar is barely in Abyssinia. Still, there is no denying that it will render European wares much more accessible, and will facilitate that export of coffee, which is already a large part of the country's trade. It will bring to Abyssinia new possibilities both of luxury and wealth, and it has virtually been built for Abyssinia by France. *Per contra*, the only British railway of which Menelik and his councillors hear much talk is that famous Cape to Cairo line, which can manifestly have no commercial purpose, nor be anything, if ever it comes to be, but a kind of stalking-horse for territorial annexation. It is one of the penalties inseparable from indulgence in these visionary schemes that we must always appear as probable enemies and aggressors to all those who could by any possibility prove a hindrance to the execution of the design.

- ART. IV.—1. *The Wild Rabbit in a New Aspect.* By J. SIMPSON. Second edition. London: William Blackwood & Sons. 1895.
2. *The Book of the Rabbit.* Second edition revised and enlarged. By KEMPSTER W. KNIGHT. London: L. Upcott Gill. N.D.
3. *Rabbits for Prizes and Profit.* By CHARLES RAYSON. London: L. Upcott Gill. N.D.
4. *The Rabbit.* By JAMES EDMUND HARTING. London: Longmans, Green & Co. 1898.
5. *The Practical Rabbit Keeper.* By CUNICULUS. London: Cassell & Company, Limited. N.D.

THE proverbial fecundity of the rabbit has long attracted the attention of naturalists and exercised the calculating powers of mathematicians. Pliny the elder, in the first century of the Christian era, remarked on the extraordinary prolificness of the rabbits in the Balearic Islands, which increased so rapidly that they devoured the harvests and produced famine among the human inhabitants. Pennant, the naturalist, eighteen centuries later, reckoned that in so short a period as four years the descendants of a single pair of rabbits would amount to the amazing number of 1,247,840. For the purposes of this calculation he supposed that each female rabbit would bring forth a litter seven times a year, and that each litter would consist on an average of eight young ones. Pennant's figures have been quoted (we imagine without verifying the calculation) by numerous subsequent writers. Any criticisms, though they might reduce the result of the sum by a quarter or half a million, are really trifling; for by increasing the period from four years to five or six, which is a very insignificant time in the history of the world, there is no doubt that a pair of rabbits may quickly increase to several millions. We may therefore accept Pennant's calculation as possibly somewhat, but certainly not very much, exaggerated. A wild rabbit will breed at the age of six months, and in some cases may have six lots of young in the course of a year. Each litter numbers from five to seven, but there are often fewer and very often more. Such is the fruitfulness of the rabbit, which is perhaps its main characteristic. The next is its destructive power, from which mankind has long suffered. Strabo, just before the Christian era, wrote in his

'Geography' that rabbits were abundant in Spain, and that they destroyed seeds and plants by gnawing at their roots. He tells us also that the people of Majorca and Minorca had sent a deputation to the Romans begging that new lands might be given them, as they could no longer resist the vast multitudes of rabbits which were driving them out of their country. Pliny, in his 'Natural History,' confirms the story, and relates how these people of the Balearic Islands begged the Emperor Augustus to let them have the assistance of a number of soldiers to fight the increasing rabbits. Whether the soldiers were sent, and, if so, what success the Roman legionaries had in this unequal combat, we are not informed. Thus in ancient Rome, as well as in New Zealand to-day, the attention of the statesman was engaged in the destruction of rabbits.

We venture to think that no quadruped, so small and apparently so insignificant, has played a more important part in the political and the social history of the Anglo-Saxon race. It has set class against class, and long threatened to promote war between landlord and farmer. It has called forth the greatest severities of the Legislature. In England alone many thousands of men have been hurried, on account of it, to the gaol and the gallows. Governments in the Antipodes have spent vast sums upon its extermination. A far-seeing historian,* who wrote about thirty or forty years ago, observed that in several of our English shires the rabbit was the best ally of the Radical. This awful alliance was well calculated to fill with dismay the breast of the stoutest Tory. Lord Stanhope did not live to see the Session of 1880, but the angry passions which were aroused by the famous Hares and Rabbits Bill are still fresh in all our memories.

It is this importance of the rabbit, as well as its interest to the sportsman, which must be our excuse for devoting a few pages to so apparently uninteresting an animal. To zoologists the rabbit is a small hare, one of the *Leporidae*, a family of which about thirty members are scattered, mostly over the Northern hemisphere. Excepting the hispid hare of Northern India, it is the only one which burrows; but rabbits occasionally breed above ground in forms like hares. In old days the word 'rabbit' was only applied to the young coney; and in ancient sporting jargon it was correct to

* Earl Stanhope: see 'History of England in the Reign of Queen Anne.'

speak of a nest of rabbits, but a bury of coneys. Another old English word for the rabbit was 'ryote,' whence the hunting expression of hounds 'running riot.' Almost every other European language has derived its name for the rabbit from the Latin *cuniculus*, which also means 'a burrow.' The classic reader may perhaps remember how Martial suggests that rabbits taught men to undermine besieged towns:—

'Gaudet in effossis habitare cuniculus antris;
Monstravit tacitas hostibus ille vias.'

The chisel-edged teeth of rabbits, like those of other rodents, need constant work, and if one should be broken or displaced, as sometimes happens, the opposite one will grow out to an enormous length. It is strange that, with these formidable weapons, a rabbit should so seldom bite. Most persons probably are not aware that rabbits ever use their teeth, yet there are a number of cases recorded where they have inflicted comparatively severe wounds on men and dogs. This commonly happened when they were being taken from nets or traps. The rabbit depends on flight for safety, and the white tail of the first rabbit which perceives the peril acts as a danger signal and a guide to the others. To protect their young they will attack stoats, weasels, and crows with astonishing courage; and in times of danger they may be seen carrying their little ones in their mouths like cats; they swim well when pressed, and can climb trees with rough sloping trunks or ivy.

A wild variety, which is called the 'silver grey,' has long been kept in some warrens. Gervaise Markham (1631) describes them, and values their skins at 2s. each, the common rabbits' being then worth 2d. or 3d. Nowadays, except for making cheap imitations of better furs, rabbits' skins are in no great demand with furriers. For making felt for hats they are of enormous commercial importance. The hair is cut off by a machine with revolving knives, the skins make glue, and the remains serve for manure. There is an increasing trade from Australia. The best skins, however, are English, and the animals should be killed in the winter. Wild rabbits with white fur sometimes appear. There are usually some to be seen in Bosworth Park in Leicestershire, and at Boyles Court in Essex. Black rabbits are commoner, and we have seen great numbers in Lyme Park in Cheshire, some in Albury Park in Surrey, and a few in many other places.

It is generally believed that the first rabbits were intro-

duced into the British Islands by the Romans. They are still making their way northward, and there are many parts of Scotland, where rabbits are now abundant, in which they were unknown some fifty years ago.

The native land of the rabbit is apparently Spain. From that country it has spread naturally, or has been introduced by man into all those parts of the world where it now flourishes. In ancient and even in mediæval days the rabbit was so closely identified with Spain (in which country it is still very abundant) that it appeared as an emblem upon money. There are coins of the Emperor Hadrian, who was a Spaniard by birth, which bear on the reverse side a figure of Hispania with a rabbit beside her. In old Spanish playing-cards clubs were represented by rabbits.

The emigration from Spain has taken place within historic times, and the ancient people of the East had never seen a rabbit. The Jews were unacquainted with it; and although we read in the Book of Proverbs—‘The conies are but a feeble folk, yet make they their houses in the rocks’—the animal which is referred to in the Hebrew text is, of course, the Syrian hyrax, a small creature with teeth like a rhinoceros and other characters which show it to be allied to the elephant.

It seems clear that in ancient times the rabbit was not found in Greece or in Italy. Strabo mentions it as extending over the whole of Spain and as far along the coast of the Mediterranean as Marseilles. Claudius Ælianus, who wrote his ‘*De Natura Animalium*,’ in seventeen books, at the end of the second century, also speaks of the rabbits of Spain. On the other hand, we have read that Confucius names the rabbit among animals which are worthy of being sacrificed to the gods. This, if true, is interesting, for Confucius flourished at least five hundred years B.C. We do not know whether these rabbits were wild or domesticated; nor, let us confess without shame, have we verified the reference in the original language. From Spain the rabbits have naturally spread without difficulty over France, to the sand dunes of the Netherlands, and the forests of Germany. But in that country their increase has been sternly checked by the energy of German foresters, whose example we shall no doubt some day follow. In the North as well as the East of Europe the cold of the winter is too severe, and it is for that reason that they have not established themselves in Scandinavia and Russia. In the South of Europe they have spread eastward, wherever they

can find suitable districts for their burrows and sufficient food. Around Mount Sinai there is a race of rabbits with some slight differences from the ordinary animal, which once led naturalists to think they might be of a different species. On the African coast of the Mediterranean rabbits have crossed from the Iberian Peninsula, or it may be that North-West Africa is the original home of the rabbit, from which it has made its way into Spain.

In the New World rabbits have been introduced by man, but without any remarkable result. Our common rabbit is hardly established in the North, though it is said to be now naturalised in some spots in South America. The grey 'rabbit' of the Americans, which is found more or less all over the United States, is a species of hare (*Lepus sylvaticus*) which does not burrow, though it takes refuge in holes when pursued by enemies. In temperate climates, if domestic rabbits are turned out, they soon revert from their fanciful colours to the original grey, whilst in the tropics, which do not agree with them, they retain their coloured markings. In Jamaica there were rabbits (now, we believe, extinct) of slate colour and white, variously marked, which had been set at liberty long ago by colonists. In the Falkland Islands there are rabbits, descended from a few turned loose by passing ships, which are black and white, with symmetrical markings on the face. The history of the rabbits in the island of Porto Santo, near Madeira, has been made famous by Darwin, who was greatly interested in the peculiarities which they had developed. They are to all appearance a wild breed, but are about one-third smaller than our common rabbit; in colour they are much redder above and greyer below; their ears are also destitute of black tips. They are the descendants of a tame doe and her young who were liberated about A.D. 1418 by Gonzales Zarco. Having no mammalian enemies upon this island, in thirty-seven years they had multiplied beyond belief and made the spot intolerable for human beings. Some years ago a couple were brought to the Zoological Gardens, where the late Mr. Bartlett described them as the wildest animals he had ever known. In habits they were nocturnal, as active as rats, and as wild as hawks to the last. Under the influence of captivity and of the English climate their ears became tipped with black fur.

In Australia the plague of rabbits has assumed a really serious aspect, in spite of every effort of the Governments to suppress it. The whole breed is descended from three

couples of rabbits, which were introduced many years ago by a public-spirited gentleman who wished to provide the colonists with sport and food. A suitable climate and the absence of carnivorous enemies have combined to produce the present appalling condition of affairs. The State-appointed rabbit boards have imported mongooses, stoats, and weasels. But these, by showing a preference for poultry, have not earned the gratitude of the colonists. As a last resort rabbits, infected with terrible contagious illnesses, have been turned loose, but without avail. At present the Governments are engaged in fencing off with wire netting, at enormous expense, those parts into which the rabbits have not yet penetrated. In Victoria one rabbit fence has been erected over 150 miles long. New Zealand, which might have profited by the experience of Australia, is equally afflicted with the rabbit pest. Some idea of the slaughter which goes on may be gathered from the fact that over 15,000,000 rabbit skins have been exported from New South Wales in a year.

Mercifully, in most countries, the persecutions of other animals and mortality from diseases have checked the increase of rabbits. Besides mankind their enemies are numerous. There are stoats who hunt the terrified and paralysed rabbit with equal persistence above and below ground. By imitating the squeals of a rabbit the present writer has repeatedly attracted a stoat—upon one occasion so close to his feet that he was able to knock it over with a stick. Foxes for the most part live on rabbit diet, diversified with field mice and beetles. Badgers will dig out and devour litters of young rabbits. Where rats are big and ferocious they will attack young and old. Poaching cats destroy great numbers, and are sometimes bolted from the burrows by ferrets. Eagles, where they exist, fly at no higher game if they can get rabbits, and buzzards can hold and kill a nearly full-grown one. Very young rabbits, just out of their holes, often fall victims to owls and crows.

But of all enemies the most active is man, who has decided that rabbits are vermin and not game, and who traps and shoots without respect for close times and breeding seasons. Of the various traps for taking rabbits the most used is the common steel trap with cruel interlocking teeth. The humane device of covering the jaws with gutta-percha, or something equally soft, unfortunately allows the rabbit to draw its leg out. Wire snares in runs need great skill in

setting properly, and a spot must be chosen where the rabbit will be travelling at sufficient speed to run unawares into the noose. It is a good trick of old poachers to rub their hands with earth before setting a trap, which appears to disguise the suspicious and offensive smell of a human being. Long nets, into which rabbits are driven by a clever dog, are the favourite implements of rabbit poachers on a large scale. But similar nets, raised up and suddenly dropped when the rabbits are out feeding, are used to cut them off from their burrows before shooting. The ingenious trap fence of wire netting is a simple development of this, by which many hundred rabbits can easily be caught in an enclosure at one pull of the string. Old warreners used to love the pitfall trap with a cover balanced on pins at each end. This can be fixed with a latch until the suspicions of rabbits frequently passing over are disarmed. Then, in a single night, such numbers may tumble in that half are suffocated and trampled to death. To make rabbits leave their burrows and lie out before a shooting day there seems to be nothing more efficacious than paraffin on paper put into the holes, though a ferret smeared with asafoetida and run in with a string is recommended—we doubt not with truth—as being equally successful.

Rabbit hawking is a form of falconry which can be practised in countries where trees make it impossible to fly what are called the 'long-winged hawks.' A female goshawk is the proper bird for this venerable and fascinating sport, which requires much leisure and more patience than most of us possess.

Rabbit shooting is a sport which presents many attractions. It has in a great degree two qualities which add a charm to, if indeed they do not constitute the charm of, sport—uncertainty and variety. A rabbit is almost always the first thing which falls to the gun of the youthful sportsman; and there are few men who do not remember the day when they went out armed, for the first time, with a gun (much too big and heavy) to shoot rabbits. Rabbit shooting is often almost the only sport which poor men can afford, and it is the only shooting which farmers in the country and tradesmen from provincial towns ever enjoy. Tastes differ, and, whatever may be thought about the sport of shooting hares, there can be no two opinions about rabbits. For our own part, we have always thought that hare shooting—at least, when many are shot—was the

dullest of amusements. The great animal, cantering away or limping towards you, never excites the same desire to let off the gun as does the smaller scampering rabbit. The speed of the hare when pressed and really extending his legs is much the faster, but the rabbit always starts at his highest pressure and keeps it up for about fifty yards. The full speed of the hare is never appreciated until he is seen in front of greyhounds, harriers, or beagles. For this reason we have always agreed with a certain poet, who urged that hares should only be coursed or hunted :—

‘ And let the courser and the hunter share
Their just and proper title to the hare.’

But these arguments cannot be applied to the rabbit, and who is there that does not remember his excitement and surprise when, after a deafening report and a painful kick from the gun, he saw his first rabbit turn head over heels and drop dead ?

In all sport, surroundings and weather share in adding to the pleasures of the day. The variety of landscape and country in which rabbits may be shot is almost endless. There are days beside the hedgerows of pasture fields and corn fields, and others on gorse-covered commons and sandy heaths, covered with heather and honeycombed with rabbit-holes ; there is rabbit shooting in dense oak woods, with muddy rides and rough clearings ; there is another sort of sport in parks and neat cultivated plantations ; there are rabbit warrens on bleak inland limestone hills and on dry sandy links by the shore ; there is rabbit shooting on open downs with short grass, and another sort among the bracken under spreading trees. All these have their merits, and have often been praised by writers on shooting ; all can be enjoyed by turn and in their season. A good bag of rabbits may be got upon the sand-hills in the month of August, but one must wait for the month of November before the woodlands can be properly beaten. A very pleasant kind of shooting is to be had in large straggling woods, where rabbits are difficult to get at and beaters are scarce. Then beagles may be used to drive them past the guns, who stand quiet and concealed in the clearings. This agreeable sport combines some of the delights of both hunting and shooting, and the rabbits are killed by the guns to the cheerful music of a pack of hounds. This shooting with beagles is much favoured by farmers in Surrey and Sussex, among whom we have often heard beagles called ‘ rabbit hounds.’ It is on

such days as these that a man learns that he must not shoot where the rabbit is, but where it will be.

There is, lastly, another kind of rabbit shooting which to our thinking surpasses all others. Let the reader imagine a large circular bay on a flat coast, with rows upon rows of sand-hills, covered in parts with close-cropped turf, and in others with long, coarse, grey sea-grass. In the distance are rocky cliffs and a blue sea, with white foaming rollers fresh from the Atlantic, which break upon the shore and flow up to the edge of the dunes. The hills are strewn with seaweed and shells thrown up by the gales, and here and there wooden wreckage and rotten timbers are half buried in the sand. From the top of each succeeding ridge one has a view of the open sea. The sky is blue, the air charged with salt, and the wind smelling of sea-breezes. Overhead, gulls and terns are calling, flocks of oyster-catchers answer from the beach, and now and then a curlew may be heard. Wheatears with white rumps flit in front of us and pink thrift grows at our feet. On a September or October morning the sun is cheerful, and a gentle south-westerly wind blows a few fleecy clouds across the sky. Such a place is a paradise for the rabbits; and who would not enjoy the day amidst such surroundings? The successive ridges of the sand-links break up the country, and as we mount each hill, or turn round a corner, there are always a few rabbits making for their holes. It is often an occasion for long shots, and a charge of $2\frac{3}{4}$ drachms of powder and 1 oz. of shot, which is quite enough for stopping a rabbit in a covert at short range, is hardly sufficient here. No dog is needed, and the only requirement is a man to pick up and carry the rabbits as they are shot, for in such a place there is little chance of their all being found unless this is done at once. Very often a rabbit, trusting to his sandy colour, remains crouching and invisible until you are upon him; but, once started, there is no dodging about as there is in a wood or gorse; and the rabbit knows well that he is not safe until he has reached his hole or crossed the ridge of the sand-hill. Such shots are not difficult—much less difficult than the chances you get in a covert where rabbits only double backwards and forwards among the undergrowth.

Yet, though you may be pretty certain where the rabbit is in a wood when you cannot see him, we do not advise the practice of shooting where you *think* he is, at all events if there are any beaters and dogs. This, however, is the

method recommended by Mr. Watts in a very diverting but little-known poem, 'Remarks on Shooting':—

'More difficult than hares to hit,
They frequently appear to flit
Like shadows past one; good indeed
Is then the aim that bids them bleed.
If you would see them nicely stopped
In the thick wood, you must adopt
Snap-shooting, for you'll seldom there
Have time to take them full and fair;
E'en lost to view, advance your gun
Quickly to where you think they run;
Regard not grass, nor bush, nor briar,
Through each and all that instant fire.
Bang! it is well. You saw him not,
And yet you've killed him on the spot.'

* The subject of enormous bags is not a very interesting one, to our mind, for in many cases the rabbits were trapped into enclosures, and the shooting of them was certain as long as the sportsmen had cartridges to fire off and their guns did not become too hot to hold. For many years the record bag of rabbits was that made in December 1861, at Lord Stamford's, at Bradgate Park, in Leicestershire. In one day thirteen guns killed 3,333 rabbits. This was always referred to as the celebrated 'threes' bag. The rabbits inhabited several hundred acres of rough ground covered with rushes, fern, and coarse grass. This was divided from the deer-park by a stone wall, and in the park three walls were built out at right angles, which formed two enclosures of about thirty or forty acres each. Holes were made, with wooden doors at intervals, along the main wall, so that the rabbits could feed in the enclosures in the park. They were never allowed to make burrows, but there was plenty of rough grass to provide covert on shooting days. On the night before shooting, when the rabbits were supposed to be out feeding, the doors in the walls were shut, and the rabbits remained lying out in the enclosures. Occasionally the plan failed when a wet or foggy night kept the rabbits near their burrows.

But this enormous bag has now been surpassed by Mr. Lloyd Price on his estate at Rhiwlas, in North Wales, where everything is devoted to raising a big stock of rabbits and presenting them to the guns. In 1883 a party of nine guns killed 3,684 rabbits, and in 1885 the amazing figure of 5,086 was reached.

In the way of individual bags made by one man, we believe that no shot has ever surpassed Lord de Grey's bag of 920 in a day. The next best was made in the same year, 1885, by the late Sir Victor Brooke, who killed 740 rabbits in a day to his own gun. He fired exactly 1,000 cartridges, and shot half the day from his right and half from his left shoulder.

In a warren, where a great slaughter is not the chief object, a contemplative man may enjoy stalking rabbits with a rifle, or lying out concealed and waiting until one comes within range. It is not a bad plan to climb into a tree, if there happens to be one within a convenient distance of the burrows. Here, among the branches, out of sight, the rifleman may pick off one after another at his leisure. The rabbits, startled by the successive reports, look up; but as they neither see nor smell any perceptible danger, they soon begin to feed again. The disadvantage of a tree is the horrible discomfort if one remains there long, and most people will vastly prefer to be concealed among the fern or rough grass, or to lie behind the crest of a ridge. If there is no covert at all, it is easy to put up a few hurdles or bundles of gorse, and to leave them so that the rabbits may become indifferent to their appearance. In this shooting the proportion of hits to misses at 60 yards will be small compared with the same number of cartridges from a shot-gun at 30. But with a good rifle, well sighted, and a hollow-fronted conical bullet, not many rabbits ought to escape wounded. The horrid spectacle of a rabbit dragging himself slowly to die in his hole will be often avoided by the use of these expanding bullets. In some cases, if the burrow is a short one, such a rabbit may be dragged out by a ferret on a line.

We have often thought that the hunting of rabbits with ferrets was a form of sport which was less appreciated than it ought to be. To those who conquer the natural feeling of repulsion, which it seems generally to arouse, the ferret is a charming little animal. Its graceful form and lively expression, its wonderful intelligence and surprising memory are combined with indefatigable ardour in the chase. Ferrets are, of course, often used as a means of bolting rabbits for shooting purposes, but in that case the ferret is subsidiary to the gun, and the sportsman does not have the pleasure of managing the ferrets and watching them at their work. When he has also bred and trained them himself, the delight which may be derived from this humble

sport is only somewhat removed from the pleasure of hunting a pack of beagles.

The use of ferrets in the pursuit of rabbits is of very venerable antiquity. The Romans, who knew the ferret as *furectus*, delighted in the sport. Pliny describes it, and after mentioning the rabbits in the Balearic Islands, he writes:—‘The ferret is greatly esteemed for its skill in ‘catching them.’ Strabo speaks of wild weasels from Africa, trained for the purpose, which compel the rabbits to fly to the surface, where they are taken by persons standing by. They were used by Genghis Khan, the great Mongol conqueror of the twelfth century. They are mentioned by the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick the Second among a number of animals employed in hunting. It is commonly asserted (we believe without any evidence to support it) that the Romans introduced the ferret into the British Isles at the same time as they imported the rabbit. Be this as it may, ferreting has long been known in Britain, and it was at one time an honoured sport. By a statute of Richard II. (1390) any one who had not land of the annual value of 40s. was prohibited from keeping ferrets. The use of nets to stop the rabbit when the ferret bolts him is very ancient. A second method, as he runs for safety, is to catch him with a few lively terriers. This is exciting sport (especially for the terriers), where there is plenty of open ground without covert for the rabbit. Unless the dogs are very well broken, and mute as well, the noise will effectually prevent the rabbits bolting, and often enough, in any case, the whole pack will be coursing a rabbit in one direction, whilst two or three others take the opportunity of bolting unobserved. A third and last method is to shoot the rabbits as they bolt. This is a modern form of rabbiting, for it was not until comparatively modern days that the gun, or the sportsman, was able to knock over with any certainty a running rabbit. In this branch of ferreting the bag depends more upon the skill and eye of the sportsman than upon the activity and training of the ferrets.

The greatest number of rabbits will, we think, be got by the ancient, quiet, and peaceful way of laying a small net over each hole from which a rabbit may be expected. These nets, of which a great number are always required, are called in the Southern counties ‘flams,’ a word of which we do not know the etymology. It is better that they should not be tightly pegged down, for then the rabbit, when it rushes out, will roll over firmly entangled in the meshes, instead

of pushing against it and retreating into the burrow. In an open warren or a park it is easy to discover and net every bolt-hole, but in a thick hedgerow this is often impossible, and it is amazing from what distant and unexpected holes the rabbits will choose to bolt if they are left unnetted. Experienced warreners and most poachers have a trusted dog, of some mongrel breed, who shows them what burrows are tenanted and saves them much time and trouble.

Experience in ferreting rabbits will teach two invaluable rules. The first is to maintain perfect silence; the second is not to stand to the windward of the burrows. Rabbits have long ears and sensitive noses, and once they are aware of the danger outside they will often allow the ferret to tear them to pieces in their holes rather than face their other enemies. The difficulty of making a rabbit bolt depends also greatly on the weather. A rough wet day is always bad; whilst in still dry autumn frosty weather they come out at once. Sir Francis Bacon has a story of some students who went out rabbiting, and took with them a very simple fellow, upon whom they impressed the need of silence. Upon approaching the warren the simpleton in great delight shouted out: 'Ecce multi cuniculi!' And being scolded, when every rabbit vanished into its hole, he exclaimed: 'Who would have thought that rabbits understood Latin?'

Many writers have said, like Strabo, that the ferret is a native of Africa. This is not so, and, in fact, the ferret is nowhere found wild. It is a domestic breed of polecat. Ferrets will interbreed with polecats, and this cross is excellent for improving the size and working powers of ferrets, which are apt to deteriorate owing to the disgusting and unhealthy way in which they are usually kept. Any old hutch, near a pigsty, full of damp straw and rotten food, is thought good enough. The result is red mange, foot-rot, sweat, and a host of other horrible maladies known to ferret keepers. Ferrets are really very cleanly little animals, who delight in sunshine and warm dry beds. Each is as different in character and merit, it is said, as the different hounds in a pack; and the bad habit of biting the hand which takes them up might have been cured by petting and handling when they were young. Strabo mentions that for rabbiting the Romans used to muzzle their ferrets, and this is still often done with a muzzle of string or brass; but it is difficult to manage effectively.

We need not declaim against the monstrosly cruel plan which gamekeepers sometimes have of sewing up the ferret's lips with a needle and thread before letting it loose into the rabbit burrow.

We have dwelt upon the charms and the interest of rabbiting with ferrets. Before leaving the subject it is only right to mention its disadvantages. There are days when the rabbits do not bolt and the ferret does not return, whilst you wait shivering, in driving rain or piercing east wind, above-ground, wondering what is happening below. There are times when the ferret kills a rabbit in the burrow, and not having, of course, been fed in the morning, makes a hearty meal and goes to sleep. This is called 'lying up' in the burrow. You wait, you call, you whistle, you dig, and then wait again, perhaps for an hour. This is despairing, and you vow you will never go out rabbiting again. Some try to avoid this mischance by working the ferret with a long line to its collar; but this rarely does well, and the cord is apt to get caught round roots or stones. When the ferret 'lies up' it may remain twenty-four hours. Sometimes it at last appears at the mouth of a hole. You rush to seize it and it dodges back—that also is despairing. The only thing to do is to leave a boy to watch the hole or to place a baited box-trap at the entrance. If the burrow is small you may dig it out, or you may stop all the holes and return next day, when you will probably find the ferret, hungry and penitent, waiting inside the entrance.

The fiendish ingenuity of man has devised two other means by which rabbits may be driven out. The first is by specially constructed fuses which fill the burrows with a stifling smoke. But they are not (according to some who have tried them) always effective. Much depends on the direction of the wind and the size of the rabbit burrow. The fuse must be put in so that the wind will send the smoke into the hole, and in flat ground or a hole with many galleries this is not easy. Another more primitive method is said to be practised on sand-hills near the sea. A lively crab, of sufficient size, is found upon the beach. A little melted wax is poured on its shell and a small end of candle stuck upon it. The candle is then lighted, and the crab, bearing this torch on its back, is started down the rabbit's hole, in which it is not slow to take refuge. The rabbit is also, it is said, not much slower in bolting, which indeed is not surprising.

Of the many varieties of rabbits which fanciers have

produced, Angoras and Himalayans, lop-eared and Patagonians, silver-creams and Dutch (all equally curious and equally useless), one kind only deserves our notice, and that is the Belgian hare or *leporine*. This curious animal was said to be a cross between a rabbit and a hare. Stories of hybrids are always accepted by the public with willing credulity. An enterprising showman in Paris once advertised an exhibition at which might be seen the offspring of a squirrel and a carp. Visitors were told, with many apologies, that the Emperor had ordered this strange monster to be brought for his inspection to the palace, and that they must be content that day with the sight of the parents. The majority were completely satisfied at being shown a squirrel in a cage and a large carp in an aquarium. The *leporine* is not a hybrid, although that belief is universal. Though very like a hare, it is only a large breed of rabbit which is much reared in hutches in Belgium. Several hundred tons are exported from Ostend to this country in a season.

Profitable rabbit farming is a subject which has fascinated writers on rural economy. We may dismiss at once a Frenchman who promised an income of 800*l.* a year from a capital of 20*l.* invested in rabbits.* Cobbett, whose 'Cottage Economy' is now too seldom read, recommends rabbits to train the good qualities of children and to supply the larder:—

'Three does and a buck will give you a rabbit to eat for *every three days in the year*, which is a much larger quantity of food than any man will get by spending half his time in the pursuit of *wild* animals, to say nothing of the toil, the tearing of clothes, and the danger of pursuing the latter.'

In France, as far as one can discover, great numbers of rabbits are reared for the market, and doubtless, on a small scale, the thrifty efforts of the breeder will be rewarded. In Germany, where many people would as soon touch a rabbit as an Englishman would eat a squirrel, a whole library has been published on this subject.† It is only when this sort of business is embarked on upon a large scale that

* See Despouy, 'Le lapin domestique,' Paris, 1838.

† See Duncker, 'Die rationelle Kaninchenzucht'; same author, 'Deutsche Kaninchen'; Schiffmann, 'Das französische Kaninchen'; Renneke, 'Das zahme Kaninchen'; Redares, 'Die Kaninchenzucht'; Hochstetter, 'Das Kaninchen'; Eckhardt, 'Anleitung zu der rationellen Kaninchenzucht'; Präper, 'Kaninchenkochbuch,' and many others.

difficulties begin, and the profit is swallowed up by expenditure on labour, rent, rates, and repairs. The best known writer on this kind of rabbit farming is Major Morant, whose experience and advice is quoted in many books on rabbits. He recommends moveable hutches with wire-netting bottoms, through which the rabbits graze. They are moved two or three times a day. The ground is never tainted, the grass is improved, and two lads can move 200 hutches in an hour and a half. The young, after weaning, need a little hay, corn, and bran; and at twelve weeks old, when they are killed, they should weigh 4 lbs. Now as to the profits: 200 does will produce 5,000 young in the year; these, at 6*d.* per lb., with their skins, mean the receipt of 500*l.* to set off against expenses. In the winter, the 200 does must be put into sheds and fed. We leave all this to the consideration of the reader without comment.

More convincing are the experiments of those who have tried to work warrens of wild rabbits on paying principles. Mr. Simpson, the wood agent at Wortley Park, Sheffield, certainly has some remarkable results to show from a warren of over 70 acres and also from an experimental acre devoted to rabbits. His system is to kill off all but breeding stock before the winter, and also to dress the land each year with salt and gas-lime. It stands to reason that an enclosed pasture cannot go on producing tons of rabbit flesh and bone if nothing is ever put back. Many warrens which are called 'rabbit-sick,' or tainted, are really only suffering from an exhausted soil. The young litters will be ready to eat the grass as it grows, and no feeding ground should be wasted by allowing burrows except in defined places. In this way a warren may be made to produce well over fifty rabbits to the acre with tolerable certainty. These, of course, are regularly hand-killed, and fetch a rather better price than shot rabbits. When rabbits are only shot and the warren is left until winter, not more than ten rabbits an acre can be expected. On the other hand, owners of warrens must remember that the shooting is a valuable source of income. Rabbit shooting over a fairly good warren is said to fetch without difficulty 10*l.* a day for each gun. The warren owner retains the rabbits; and many rabbits, we need hardly add, are shot at more than once and yet live to earn an income for their owners by their agility. There is an enormous demand for wild rabbits in large towns, and the price which the warren owner can obtain depends partly on the distance from his

market, if the game dealer pays the carriage. Mr. Simpson reckons 2s. 2d. a couple, while Mr. Harting surpasses this with 2s. 9d. We do not know about other districts, but certainly in the South of England the price of rabbits sometimes falls to 1s. 4d. and 1s. a couple. In calculating the profits of warrens this is a serious matter.

It is hardly possible to exaggerate the damage to crops and to woodlands which may be inflicted by rabbits.* There is scarcely any vegetable matter that comes amiss to them as long as it is green; and in a hard winter they will gnaw off the bark of timber trees a hundred years old. Elm, ash, and beech trees are stripped of their bark to the height of a couple of feet or more by rabbits standing on their hind legs. Among farmers' crops, roots, and in particular turnips, suffer the worst. The rabbits always damage more roots than they actually devour, and those which are gnawed become unfit to store. It is said that one can tell whether turnips have been nibbled by hares or rabbits by observing whether the rind is eaten. The rabbit eats skin and all; the hare nibbles off the skin and leaves it in chips. Grain crops are most damaged when they are young and green; the rabbits from any covert adjoining will eat them down from the covert side. Hay fields which are exposed to the incursions of great numbers of rabbits suffer in the same way; and the grass along a covert is sometimes so tainted that it has to be discarded by the hay-makers. Even in permanent pasture fields rabbits will do a great deal of damage by eating the grass, and also by their scratchings, their runs, and their droppings. It is estimated that fifty rabbits will eat down the grass nearly as fast as it grows upon one acre of pasture. Every one knows that no turf is closer eaten than that nibbled by rabbits, and the best lawns come from warrens and downs.

The damage to woodlands, if they are commercially farmed, is more serious and more lasting. To underwoods, which are cut and sold every fourteen years, rabbits may in one winter do damage of which traces remain for years, and which seriously affects the price afterwards obtained. This underwood, in the southern counties, generally consists of oak, ash, birch, hazel, and willow, mixed occasionally with beech, cherry, and hornbeam. It is in the years after the periodic cutting that the rabbits do the greatest damage

* See the evidence given before the Select Committee in 1872, and the Parliamentary Committee on 'Forestry' in 1887.

by eating off the young shoots which spring from the stubbs after the last crop has been cut and cleared off. These shoots are the whole foundation of the next fourteen years' growth, and in a short time, where rabbits are abundant, the destruction which may be done is almost beyond belief. When snow is on the ground the rabbits are obliged to eat bark or die, and they soon turn to the older stems of underwood and gnaw off the bark as far as they can reach. Sometimes, when there has been deep snow, frozen hard, on which the rabbits can move about, one may observe how the bottom of the underwood is protected by the snow, but the bark stripped off some feet above the ground. Some owners of underwood think that they can recoup themselves for such losses by the sale of rabbits shot. But, although they may have their reward from the sport, no number of rabbits sold can make up for the harm done by an overstocked preserve of rabbits which have access to good underwood. *

There is only one method by which such woodlands can be protected from rabbits, and that is by vigorous shooting and ferreting before the cold weather comes. The stock of rabbits can in this way be materially reduced for the winter, and there is no fear that it will not recover next season. The protection of young plantations of any sort, destined to become timber trees, can only be secured by wire fencing. Where woods are farmed with a view to profit this is a serious item. The cost of fencing an absolutely square ten-acre plot of young seedlings at 6*d.* a yard, which is extremely low, would be 22*l.* The expense of wire fencing depends very much upon whether it is intended to be permanent or merely intended to ward off attacks from rabbits while the trees are very small. The cost of the wire is added to by iron bars, and oak or larch stakes to hold it up. Wood posts have to be periodically renewed, but good larch poles will last until young trees are fairly grown.

The great increase of rabbits which rewarded the efforts of game preservers and gamekeepers during the nineteenth century has drawn attention to their depredations. But even in the sixteenth century it was a saying among foresters:—

'If cattle and coney may enter to crop,
Young oak is in danger of losing his top.'

The damage to young conifers takes first the shape of

* See some very sensible observations on rabbits by Mr. George Dewar in 'Wild Life in Hampshire Highlands.'

biting off their leaders, which is fatal to their further value, and, secondly, of gnawing their bark, which allows the resin to run out. There are some shrubs which are less attractive to rabbits than others; but these are not timber nor underwoods for forestry purposes, and in a very hard winter they may even be attacked. Rhododendron, elder, box, dogwood, butcher's broom, and spindletree are often spoken of as 'rabbit proof,' but when rabbits are starving, in a long frost, there is nothing they may not turn to. Hollies are among the first to be barked, laurel and privet suffer as soon as snow comes, and even yew, which is poisonous to most animals (and to pheasants), cannot defy rabbits.

It cannot be wondered that all scientific foresters regard rabbits as the most pestilent vermin on the face of the earth; the only reason why they are tolerated in this country is that the owner of the woodlands is also the owner of the rabbits, and that he prefers sport to profitable forestry undertaken in a commercial spirit. For the protection of young trees every kind of mixture offensive to the rabbits' taste and smell has been tried. Train oil, tar, cow-dung, soot, lime and water mixed in different proportions laid on with a brush, have all been proved by experience to be ineffectual. Paint is successful for a short time, but is apt to injure the timber. Moreover, the labour in large plantations of renewing these applications makes them practically useless. The only protection against the omnivorous rabbits where they exist in any numbers is wire fencing, and if forestry is ever seriously prosecuted in this country the question may arise whether the plantations are to be fenced against rabbits, or all rabbits fenced into defined warrens.

The ravages of rabbits, the outcries of agriculturists, and the report of a Select Committee combined to secure the passing of the Ground Game Act, 1880. The principle of the measure is extremely simple. Every occupier of land has the right to destroy the hares and rabbits, and every agreement which purports to deprive him of that right is void. Sir William Harcourt, in moving the second reading, declared, in his finest style, that the night of June 10 would not be forgotten by farmers. In our view the measure was a just one. The Act is still carped at and abused in exaggerated terms by some persons, though none of the awful results predicted have ensued. It was thought by many opponents of the Bill that in a few years the rabbit would be an extinct animal. The Act, we admit, is open to several obvious criticisms. Farmers still grumble, and the rabbit is not exterminated.

ART. V.—1. *La Légende de la Mort en Basse-Bretagne.* Par L^E BRAZ. Paris: 1892.

2. *Les Littératures Populaires de toutes les Nations.* (a) *Traditions de la Haute-Bretagne.* Par P. SÉBILLOT. Vol. I. (Première Partie.) 1882. (b) *Légendes Chrésiennes de la Basse-Bretagne.* Par F. M. LUZEL. 1881. (c) *Contes Populaires de Basse-Bretagne.* (Voyages vers le Soleil.) Vols. I. and II. 1887. (d) *Littérature Orale de la Picardie.* Par E. H. CARNOY; *etc.* Paris: 1886.

3. *Essays in the Study of Folk-Songs.* By Countess MARTINENGO-CESARESCO. London: 1886.

‘A N awful thing is death and full of terror, but not to those who have learnt the true wisdom which is above. . . . For he that knows nothing concerning things to come, but deems it to be a certain dissolution . . . with reason shudders and is afraid. . . . But we deem the *action* to be a departure to another place. . . .’ So St. Chrysostom* summed up the change of aspect wrought by Christian faith where it had superseded the death-doctrine (according to his interpretation) of the creeds he controverted. And, following in the track of the Fathers, the mediæval Church in its requiems, its commemorations and intercessions, presented the idea of Death in the same impersonal fashion. King and peasant alike learnt to view it as the mere separation of soul and body, a separation terminated by the reunion of the Resurrection and Judgement Day. It was to be accepted by the penitent as ‘a homage and adoration’ from the creature to the Creator. The wicked were to see in it the just punishment of sin, ‘as by sin man,’ says St. Irenæus, ‘was holden of death.’ All men equally were to regard it as the arbitrary penalty [‘death, which is unnatural to the body’] † consequent on Adam’s transgression; while to each it might be the gateway of eternal life, the tremendous crisis of transition, where the faint torch of man’s vital spark dies out, consumed in that all-embracing flame of immortality whose comparative radiance is as the radiance of the midday sun to the taper’s flickering light. Again, to those whose theology was derived from their daily orisons, it would be presented, in the daily memento of the Mass, under the figure of its gentlest synonym—sleep:

* Homilies (LXXXIII).

† Cyril of Alexandria, ‘Commentary on St. John.’

‘Memento etiam, Domine, famulorum famularumque tuarum
 ‘qui nos praecesserunt cum signo fidei et dormiunt in somno
 ‘paci.’* Or, to cite but one more example of the semblances under which Catholicism has clothed the thought of Death, the very name—*viaticum*—bestowed upon the last Sacrament tendered by the Church to her dying children is fraught with suggestive significance. And if Western Christianity had no place in its system for death-rites such as those in use amongst Slav nations, where bread, the water-cup, coin for the expenses of wayfaring, or sharp implements for climbing heaven’s steep ascent, are provided for the pilgrimage of death,† in the Church’s rite the peasant might still discover a recognition of the need of sustenance suffered by the departing soul.

Thus Christianity has had its say. And for generation after generation the peasant’s world of Western Europe listened with docile unquestioning assent to its spiritual interpretation of that rigid physical fact, the ordeal of the final ‘market-place where all ways meet.’ They listened humbly, assented devoutly, recited as a charitable obligation the prescribed supplications, assisted as piety dictated at the offices of the dying, and observed the ceremonials of the Dead. And listening, assenting, praying, the peasant went straightway from the creed of Church and altar to formulate, with sublime unconsciousness, his own creed of human nature’s devising, not only supplemental, but at many points wholly independent of the professed faith. In their Folk-Tales, whether the *conte* fossilised the death-myths of past ages, or whether it exemplified the upgrowing legends of post-Christian years, the peasants recorded conceptions bred in their own hearts and imaginations, which found a natural counterpart in more or less clandestine practices; while both beliefs and practices would seem, in earlier days and in some provinces, to have drawn the very priests, whose duty was to exorcise such misbeliefs, into a conspiracy with their flocks, ‘avec son *Agrippa* un prêtre évoque les démons
 ‘. . . devine les secrets de l’avenir, et découvre le sort des
 ‘âmes dans l’autre vie, sans que Dieu lui vienne en aide.’‡

The idea of Death as a simple passing from one life to another of the disembodied spirit—‘we pass from one life
 ‘to another life, and each life in turn calls that passing

* Canon of the Mass.

† Songs of the Russian People. W. R. S. Ralston. London: 1872.

‡ Légende de la Mort. Introduction de M. Marillier. (The *Agrippa* is the magic book *par excellence* of Brittany and its legends.)

'death,' as a saint of the fourteenth century taught the doctrine—slipped wholly from sight. With the inveterate tendency to personification inherent to unintellectualised humanity and manifested in countless phases of primitive worship, the peasant divested death of its abstract semblance. To his eye it was not primarily an event, it was not a law (a law of mortality visible only in its effects), nor was it a force, whose fountain-head was a moral delinquency or a material necessity. Death for him was pre-eminently a person; and its personality, though the variants differed both in sex and in seeming, was persistent, resolute, definite. It was, indeed, as distinct as that ascribed—this time with the concurrence of the Christian creeds—to the principle associated with, if not akin to Death, of evil incarnated in the fallen Archangel.

True, early Christian theologians had themselves in many a phrase presented the thought of Death in images suggestive of embodiment or impersonation. The Reaper of the harvest, the Rider of the Apocalypse, have remained as the two popular similitudes under which the Scriptures figured the destroyer of the body. St. Augustine, quoting Psalm xlix., pictures Death as a shepherd: the evil are 'as sheep laid in 'hell, Death is their Shepherd.' But in each and all such instances the image is overtly an image and no more. Behind the Reaper, the Rider, the Shepherd, there is nothing but an abstraction. The Death they symbolise is within and not without a man; the figures are but masks of a thought; Reaper and Rider are, in the true sense of apocryphal writers, 'similitudes.' And though in the Gospel of Nicodemus,* in the great Good Friday dialogue between the Prince of Hell and Satan:—

[*Satan (to the Prince of Hell)*: 'Behold, prepare to receive Jesus of Nazareth; His death is near at hand, and I will bring Him hither.' *Prince*: 'Who is that Jesus of Nazareth? . . . Perhaps it is the same who took from me Lazarus?' *Satan*: 'It is the very same.' *Prince*: 'I adjure thee by the powers that belong to thee and me that thou bring Him not to me.']

Death seems to be identified with the Prince of Hell and to present a counter-personality to Satan, it is a personality more resembling that of the Ministrants of Death, Uriel † amongst the Christians, Mordâd amongst the ancient Persians, Azraël amongst Mahometans; angels who are not

* Ascribed to a writer of the third century.

† Gospel of St. Barnabas, cited by Sale (*Koran*).

so much figures in whom Death itself is embodied, as they are executors of the Death decrees of the Supreme Deity. 'Is Death either some thing or some power?' St. Augustine asks, anticipating misapprehensions. In his answer to the question he abolishes the possibility of any literal interpretation of metaphor. 'Death is the separation of the soul from the body, or a separation of the soul from God.'*

But the Death-legend of the unhampered and unrestricted folk-tale runs far otherwise. Throughout the *contes* and legends of Western Europe recent research has placed within the reach of most readers,† those who will may trace the appearance and re-appearance of that embodied phantom, grotesque, terrible as in the old *Danse Macabre*, irresistible and just, to whom the Breton—with whom death and the dead are a cult in themselves—has given the name of 'L'Ankou,' to whom the Vosges peasant refers with prosaic conviction as he states that, though not always visible, Death's passing is easily detected, if 'on ne l'a pas vue, on l'a entendue passer.'‡ Expressed or unexpressed, the idea of death, even when not directly embodied, is systematically exteriorised. It is something coming to mankind from without. 'Tous les jours vont à la mort, le dernier y arrive,' the dictum of Montaigne, is reversed. Man does not go to death: it is death seeks out man. Not, indeed, of its own will, for it may neither retard nor anticipate the hour fixed by destiny or God, it may neither choose nor reject its elect victim; but when, at the decreed hour, it comes, according to the circumstances, it is as an active, personal reality. Moreover, it can enter into relationships even with those living, whose hour-glass has still long to run. And thus, the result was inevitable, around the most uncompromising, iron-wrought actuality of earth, series upon series of the most fantastic imaginations ever devised by the brain of man have arisen, and whether the person of Death be conceived of as single or multiple, as one Death or many Deaths, the legends encircling it are numerous enough to form a deeply rooted tradition.

True, the world, the mental and moral world, whose hearts and minds evolved the Death-legend, is a world alien to our experience. It is a world where the earth visible is alive with super-material significancies. Leaf,

* Sermon II. on Psalm xlix.

† See the series of *Les Littératures Populaires*, Paris, Maisonneuve et Cie., éditeurs.

‡ 'Folk-Lore des Hautes-Vosges,' F. L. Sauvé. Paris: 1889.

stone, water, are replete with dormant or active efficacies to work good or to work ill to the human race. And whether, as some beliefs would seem to imply, matter is regarded only as a magnet attracting certain forms of sickness or health, of prosperity or misfortune, or whether, in the alternative view of occult properties, matter in its own essence is held as the direct source of favourable or unfavourable influences, the result in one respect is identical, and, either way, matter remains, in the creed of the peasant, of supreme and vital importance. For us winds blow the flame and the ashes this way or that, buds leaf into quatrefoils, birds of this or that species fly about our windows or alight upon our roofs, beasts of one or another kind cross our morning path, and the blown ashes, the bend of the flame, the fourfold blossom, the flight of birds, the beast of passage, is nothing in our sight, nothing but a trivial incident in our semi-conscious perception of what Nature is doing around and about us. But for the peasant such events are no meaningless accidents of chance. The occurrences of nature, animate or inanimate (if inanimate nature for him exists), are not occurrences. Either they are omens, portents of life and of death, of birth or marriage, of felicity, of sorrow; or they are in themselves instinct with virtue, they are *les porte-bonheur*, *les porte-malheur*, and to them are due poverty or plenty, healing or malady. Vitality is everywhere, a vitality sometimes resentful of uninvited intrusions upon its privacy, sometimes actively beneficent in its manifestation, rewarding those who enter into communion with its secret forces. The creed may be a last survival of the cult of tree, rock, and fountain denounced by priests and councils from the fifth century onwards,* or it may be an evergreen creed of the uneducated human mind. But whatever its origin, for the peasant there were trees no axe might fell unscathed; there were stones, rugged and grim, sullen and silent granites, in which life slept to waken betimes and assert its strength. There were menhirs which in their frozen winter drought would descend from their abiding-place of untold centuries to slake their thirst, on the night of God's nativity, at river or fountain, crushing with their pitiless weight any man who made essay to witness their passage. There were grey streams which at certain hours ran as red as in the Lithuanian *conte*: 'Come to us, Onùte; come and bathe. We have a river flowing

'with milk; its brim is all red wine,' calls the fairy woman whom the little maid Onùte sees bathing. But 'little brother Hare' shrills out his warning. 'Onùte, Onùte, go not. The river is all tears and the bank all 'blood.'* There were magic fountains and springs innumerable. They bear truly in many places the names of saints to whose merits the pious may, if so pleased, ascribe the potency of the waters, but draw aside the saint's cloak and the older faith will reveal itself, and the water will stand possessed in its own right of its occult powers, and the saint will discover himself as a mere accessory after the fact.

It is only in the realisation of those thickly intertangled undercurrents of peasant beliefs, upgrowths, or reminiscences—for if the memory of the peasant in matters historical is of the shortest, in matters of faith it reaches far into the fabulous past†—that any special phase of folk-lore is seen in its due proportion. So viewed the Death-legend is no precipitous offshoot into the marvellous. It is only one more development of the widespread instinct which endows all things around with the attributes of life, with the faculties of action, possibly with capacities of sensation; an instinct which, passing beyond even these limits, adds personality to the objects so endowed, giving to matter, spirit—the wood-spirit to the tree, the water-spirit to the river—and to abstract forces, bodies, or, what is slightly different and allows of many bewildering metamorphoses, embodiments.

Death is but one of many such figures. In the Russian popular tales the personification of Misery is common. The man who in his great wretchedness sings as he goes to support his courage does not walk alone. He hears another voice singing in unison with his own: it is '*Gore*,' his Misery, who companions him.‡ In a Polish *conte*,§ Misery, as a pale white girl, with long thin-fingered hands, weeps by the oven in the poor man's cottage, and when the owner escapes, leaving her imprisoned in the forsaken home, she prevails on a passing stranger to release her, and forthwith it is with him she abides. In another Slav tale, 'I am thine '*Ungelücke*,' a voice cries to the poor knight resting beneath

* Latham, 'Nationalities of Europe.' London: 1863.

† 'La mémoire historique du peuple est toujours très courte; le peuple ne se souvient que des fables,' says Renan, quoted by Luzel.

‡ Ralston, 'Songs of the Russian People.'

§ Leger, 'Contes Slaves.' Paris: 1882.

the forest tree, and Misery—unlike that Misery to whom the hero of a French *conte* addressed the strange reproach, ‘*Misère, tu me sembles bien joyeuse*’*—clothed in monster form of sadness, looks down upon her victim. Fate, a man’s individual fate, is again a frequent embodiment from the earliest ages onwards, as in the Sanscrit tale of Viravara, where the king’s faithful servant, demanding of a weeping woman why she laments, hears she is ‘the king’s Fortune.’ While not only in many Southern tales we find a survival of the old Roman goddess Fortuna, but in Norse and Teutonic folk-literature the same conception of a personal destiny is of constant recurrence. And in the beautiful Sicilian legend of Caterina, not only we see Caterina’s Fate, the tall, fair woman proffering her alternative joys, the joy of youth or the joy of age, but likewise the ‘stately lady,’ the Fate of Caterina’s mistress, who, as the two Fates meet, intercedes on Caterina’s behalf with her ‘dear sister,’ and obtains the hastening of her long deferred happiness. Or, to quote one other such embodiment, Calamity, rendered here by the word Sorrow, is something more than a mere metaphor in the song—one of the most tragic of folk-songs—whose root suggestion is the pursuing companionship of an ill-destiny:—

‘Whither shall I, the fair maiden, flee from Sorrow?
 If I fly from Sorrow into the dark forest,
 After me runs Sorrow with an axe
 “I will fell, I will fell the green oaks,
 I will seek, I will find the fair maiden.”
 If I fly from Sorrow into the open field,
 After me runs Sorrow with a scythe
 “I will mow, I will mow the open field,
 I will seek, I will find the fair maiden.”
 If I take to my bed to escape from Sorrow,
 Sorrow sits beside my pillow
 And when I shall have fled from Sorrow into the damp earth,
 Sorrow will come after me with a spade.
 Then will Sorrow stand over me and cry triumphant,
 “I have driven, I have driven the maiden into the damp earth.”

It may well be urged that neither *conte* nor folk-song belong to the section of legend-lore which claims acceptance as literal truth. Yet both tales and songs may still be fairly regarded as enclosing, in a palpably fictitious frame work, what were once floating but actual beliefs. Nor is it strange that such abstractions as sorrow and fate should

* *Littérature orale de la Picardie.*

be embodied when it is remembered that life itself was, though unembodied, constantly externalised. In perhaps the oldest existing folk-tale*—‘The Two Brothers of Egypt’—we find a type of what afterwards constituted a special group of incidents illustrating the possible detachment of the vital principle from the body of the living person. Here the hero places his heart—that is, his life—upon the blossom of the acacia tree. Or, to give a more modern instance in the widely disseminated story of mythical origin,† ‘Koschei ‘without Death’ leaves that portion of his life which can be subjected to death in an egg,‡ an egg being itself, as reddened at Easter according to Russian custom, a symbol of the sun and of life.

What are the links connecting, what is the relationship, if any, subsisting between, the survivals of those ancient personifications and the embodiments current in popular literatures of comparatively recent date, is a question—a riddle maybe—for the scientific investigator to solve. In the matter of the Death-legend, the apparently older death-myths of Eastern Europe seem somewhat remote in nature and character from those which have travelled westwards. In Russian myths it is the grim figure of the Death-woman who confronts us, ‘she who gives the dead to ‘“Baba Yaga,”’ the mysterious and evil witch of Slav fable. Death’s effigy—confused with that of winter—fashioned of straw or tree-trunk, dressed in rags or shrouded in white, bearing in some localities the sickle of a death-deity—is destroyed by fire or sunk in water during the carnival (‘Butter week’) or after Paschal week, in course of what is curiously denominated the festival of the ‘Red ‘Little Hill.’ It is a ceremony, one may observe, which seems to bear the same significance as that ‘burning of the ‘old witch’§ amongst the Twelfth Night fires which in England occasionally formed one feature of rejoicings more appropriate to the ancient commemoration of the mid-winter solstice than to the celebration of the Three Kings.|| In Finland, where we find the traditions of a non-Slavonic

* Cosquin, Introduction to ‘Contes Populaires de Lorraine.’ Paris : 1897.

† Myths and Folk-tales, Curtin. London : 1890.

‡ See also *Le Corps sans Ame*, Luzel, B.-Bretagne, and innumerable other *contes*.

§ See also the same rite at Brescia.

|| Hone’s ‘Every-day Book,’ vol. i.

race, in the Magic Songs recently translated into English,* there were, we are told, three personifications of death, or three several names by which one personification was known. And death is further provided with child and grandchild, 'a hideous brood,' in the magic song of the origin of the Snake, in whom the blood of Death and the sharpness of the wind's breath are intermingled. 'The Daughter of Pain, the girl of Death on a meadow fell asleep, threw herself down upon a slope against the side of a speckled stone; there came a mighty wind from the east and there was her offspring born. . . .' And although here and elsewhere it is difficult to discriminate between figures of speech and figures of realities, and equally difficult to define which amongst those intended for realities stand for divinities of Death—such as Scandinavian Hela or Egyptian Osiris—and which must be interpreted as embodiments of Death itself, one may conjecture that both have passed under various disguises into the popular tales of later years. But, so far as our knowledge goes, no complete collection has yet been compiled which would indicate with any approach to certainty the origins, growths, developements and modifications, the migrations, re-localisations, and transmissions from one race to another of the death-myths as a special section of folk-lore. And till this task has been accomplished, outside the pale of the professional scientist, few who have ever attempted to master the history of the branchings, intersections, ejections, and successions of the races whose descendants people Western Europe, would be so hardy as to venture upon any technical criticism of the single series of death-legends collected by M. Le Braz from the lips of the Breton peasants.

Amongst the 'Littératures Populaires' of other provinces and districts there are many sections under the heading of *Contes des Revenants*, where Death personified plays his accustomed part. Indeed, opening almost any volume, a brief search will bring to light fragmentary traditions analogous in character to those of Brittany. 'Toutes les superstitieuses se retrouvent partout, et si on ne les retrouve pas en quelque endroit, c'est qu'on ne les a pas assez cherchées,' is an axiom M. Sébillot quotes. The story of 'La Messe des Morts,' when (the circumstances differ in different localities) a man or a woman, rising unawares before daybreak to attend the first Mass, finds a crowded

* Pre- and Proto-historic Finns, J. Abercromby. London : 1898.

church of unfamiliar worshippers, and a dead priest says the office for a congregation arisen from their graves, is found more or less in widely scattered provinces throughout France; while on All Souls' Eve, in November, the month of the dead, the same ghostly procession walks between midnight and cockcrow, in the cemeteries throughout countless villages. In Picardy kindred tales of death are innumerable. In the Vosges equally death-superstitions abound, and Death's personality is accepted as an act of creation. ('Votre vie aura une fin,' God said to Adam, 'et la Mort fut créée.') But while each country may boast its own especial legends and practices, it is in Brittany, the home of men of Celtic race, that Death and the Dead reign paramount in the imaginations of the living.

The close connexion of the *légende* in La Basse Bretagne to the *conte*, in the strict meaning of the term, is more or less repudiated by M. Marillier in his introductory essay. The *légende*, indeed, is always to be distinguished from the *conte* pure and simple. Another eminent folk-lorist, M. Cosquin, has pointed out the gulf dividing the *conte* and the *superstition* in the comparative facility with which they are adopted, or adapted, by alien races.

'Il existe une grande différence entre les superstitions et les contes. Les premières, *on y croit*, et pour qu'un peuple en devienne imprégné, si elles arrivent du dehors il faut . . . un contact prolongé, une propagande opiniâtre. Mais les contes est-il besoin d'y croire pour y prendre plaisir ?'

Now the Breton Death-legend is a legend sprung from a superstition—superstition being defined as an irrational belief. It shares the nature of the superstition. It would seem to be accordingly either deep-rooted in the race as its native soil, or to have become so by prolonged contact. It represents essentially an instinctive creed—'on y croit.' Moreover, it springs—or, more accurately, was some few years ago springing—from superstitions still active enough to transform real events into legends, or, where the germ of a story belonged to older times, perhaps to other nations, to remould it according to the temperament of the day and the atmosphere of its new surroundings.

Thus, at the very outset, the *légende* as told by M. Le Braz stands outside the debate concerning the birthplace of the European *conte*, of which the issues are undetermined. And whether the mythological gospel of origins preached by the brothers Grimm be true scripture, or whether, as M. Cosquin expounds the system he adopts, the *conte* is a mere vagabond,

travelling east, west, north, south from its Indian cradle, or the theory, decisively rejected by the French scientist, of Mr. Lang, 'qui voit dans les contes l'incarnation 'd'idées communes aux sauvages de toutes les races,' be entertained by his fellow-countrymen, so far as the stories here told are concerned, matters little. Their interest lies in themselves. They represent primarily not the typical folk-tale of supernaturalism, mythical, romantic, or heroic, but are a series of stories, some older, some newer, which, taken as they stand, show us in a cycle of pictures Death as it was conceived of by the Breton peasant of the end of the eighteenth and through part of the nineteenth century; Death under the semblance with which the peasant clothed the fact, or, to put it otherwise, embodied the idea; and in a second section we have his conception, in stories as hauntingly impressive as they are unconsciously realistic, of the World of the Dead, of their affections, griefs, loves, and hates, of the conditions of existence which encompass them, and by which their relationship to the world of the living is regulated and controlled.

It is the quality of realism, realism of conception, realism of presentment, and, above all, that which alone makes realism other than a spurious trick of a doubled artificiality, realism of conviction, that gives to the Breton legend its singular strength and its characteristic severity of outline. Dual in its aspect as the Legend of Death and the Legend of the Dead, the figure dominating one and all of these brief narratives is that of L'Ankou=Death himself, visible, audible, tangible. It is a figure consistent enough in moral if not in bodily attributes, although it is yet undecided if it should be considered as one and a single, or as many resembling but successive embodiments of death. Originally, M. Marillier conjectures, L'Ankou was but one of the common herd of the dead—the last dead of the last day of the year—upon whom the office of Death perennially descended. Moreover, each parish may have had its own, but 'on distingue 'mal les uns des autres, et il semble qu'ils soient à la veille 'de se confondre dans l'imagination populaire en une seule 'divinité unique, la Mort.' The form of L'Ankou may vary, but whether he wear the semblance of a man, tall, haggard, white-haired, his face, as Mercury's amongst the gods, shadowed by the broad-brimmed hat, or whether he appears as the traditional human skeleton draped in a shroud, rarely grotesque, always formidable, the identity

of the result of his coming conduces to the impression of unity in his personality.

He does not come, for the most part, alone. He has often—the coincidence suggests a curious antithesis—like the ancient symbol of the Trees of Life, an acolyte on either side. One attendant leads the foremost of the horses, their number varies, harnessed to the Death-car [Karic ann Ankou], the other throws open all gates and removes all barriers, and, in due time, lades the car with its burden for the grave. Thus, with white horses, with black-robed servers, the ‘Chevalier de la Mort,’ as a Slav tale introduces him, comes with befitting ceremony. In La Haute Bretagne the Death-car legend sometimes takes a wilder aspect. It drives furiously, ‘as the wind of the tempest,’ it has been seen crowded with musicians, and passes with sparks of fire, crushing all who have not time to fly. And if it be true, as M. Marillier would have us believe, that the origin of L’Ankou may be traced to older cults of dead ancestral chiefs, it would seem that, though divested of the attributes of a primitive deity, he has retained some characteristics of the ancient nobles of the feudal ages.

And as he does not come unattended, neither does he come unannounced. Once, it is a belief extending from Esthonia to the Pyrenees, every man born into the world foreknew the hour of his death. Then it happened that Christ, walking upon earth, saw a man fencing his field with a hedge of straw. ‘That hedge will last but a short ‘time,’ said the Christ. ‘It will last my time,’ answered the man. Such knowledge was of ill service to the world, thought Christ, and henceforth He withdrew it. But in Brittany, nevertheless, men do not die wholly unprepared. Recognised or not (for while some men are born seers others are blind), L’Ankou sends a warning, *Pintersigne*, or *l’avision* as it is called in different districts, to tell of his approach. Some common omen of bird or beast may predict the catastrophe at hand. It may be by some chill breath of wind in the windless night, by the ringing of bells, by tears heard where no man weeps, by footprints in the strewn ashes,* by the creaking of wheels—the death-wheel superstition, so widely spread, seems possibly derived from the car of L’Ankou—by the whispering of voices, where

* See also the ‘prints in ashes.’ Celtic Folk-lore, J. Rhys, Oxford.

no voices are ; by the sound of oars, where no boat nears the shore :—

‘ Nous dormions déjà à moitié,’ a Bretonne of Port-Blanc tells the story, ‘ lorsque la voix de ma mère nous réveilla. “ Hé, les enfants, est-ce que vous n’entendez pas ? ” Je me levai, et je tendis l’oreille. “ Oui,” dis-je, “ j’entends le bruit de quatre rames qui frappent l’eau en cadence.” ’

Marie-Cinthe goes to the window ; only the road lies between the cottage and the sea. She hears the beat of oars, and voices speaking in strange languages, but the wind drowns the voices. It is some boat in distress, says the mother, who was ‘ une femme secourable,’ and Marie-Cinthe is bidden to set a light in the window that the seamen when they land may divine a hospitable dwelling. But no seamen come that way ; and not a boat, so the coastguardman on duty assures them next day, had been in sight of land. Next night

‘ Le vent s’était apaisé. La nuit était silencieuse . . . nous n’entendîmes rien. . . . Le troisième soir ma mère venait d’éteindre la chandelle, quand de nouveau arriva jusqu’à nous le *plie-ploc* de quatre rames frappant l’eau, deux à deux. Cette fois je voulais voir. Je me rhabillai et je sortis. La mer miroitait sous la lune. Je fouillai des yeux toute l’étendue claire des eaux. Je ne vis que les rochers de Saint-Gildas qui semblaient des spectres, et très loin, les bêtes mauvaises, les Sept-Iles. De barque point. Et cependant le *plie-ploc* continuait de résonner dans la nuit, comme un tic-tac régulier d’horloge. “ Eh bien ? ” demanda la vieille, quand nous eûmes repassé le seuil. Mon frère répondit : “ Ça doit être un intersigne de marin.” Ma mère, de son lit, commença aussitôt le *De profundis*. ’

In another story * *l’intersigne* takes a stranger form. Youenn—master-farmer in Briec—read many books and knew all languages. He had studied for the priesthood. One day he returns from the fair, his oxen unsold. ‘ Les ‘ bœufs l’escortaient, l’un à droit, l’autre à gauche, avec une sorte de solennité,’ says the woman whose duty it was to herd the cows. ‘ To-morrow,’ the master tells her, ‘ I shall be buried.’ *Foi de Dieu*, the beasts knew it and were sad. The ox who is black and grey had foretold it. ‘ Youenn,’ the black and grey ox, had said as they stood at the fair, ‘ return ‘ quickly to the farm, you to put your soul in order, and we to prepare for to-morrow’s work, to carry you to the grave.’ ‘ Un autre,’ the story goes on, ‘ se serait mis en colère contre ‘ le bœuf, mais lui, qui était un homme de sens, il a suivi ‘ son conseil.’

Many indeed are the variations of *l'intersigne*: an apparition of phantom priests hastening to perform the last offices at the bedside of the dying; a spectral funeral, anticipating the true; and perhaps most singular of all is *l'avisoin* of the lighted candle. It wanders through the night, barring the road to the living wayfarer, and woe to him who rashly strives with it.

‘Un soir des jeunes gens aperçoivent un cierge sans chandelier. Ils veulent passer à côté, mais le cierge leur barre le chemin. L’un d’eux frappe le cierge de son bâton et l’envoie dans un champ voisin, où il s’éteint. En se retournant il vit une forme blanche couronnée de roses et portant à la main un cierge brisé. On lui dit qu’il lui arriverait malheur, et de fait il entendait une plainte continue. Il pria un ami de venir le veiller. . . . Celui-ci s’endormit . . . le lendemain il trouva son camarade mort, à côté de lui le cierge brisé.’*

But through all changes of scene and circumstance one keenly penetrating impression is left stamped upon the mind of the reader. It is that of the intense realisation of Death as an active existence. L’Ankou is no lifeless spectral abstraction. He comes and goes, near at hand or far off, as the next-door neighbour comes and goes. The land of Brittany knows his feet. The beasts know him, and the birds. The silent dolmens, with their strange appellations, Maison des Follets, Château des Poulpiquets, Table Margot, Maison des Corrigans † have seen him pass. The ancient monoliths, the sullen menhirs, Pierre qui chôme, Fuseau de Margot, the fairy rocks of to-day, the altars, maybe, of past sacrifices, all know him well. The disused tracks, the *garennas*, chemins de la mort, the trodden high-roads across the vast *landes*, the wayside Calvaries, the reed-green stretches of waste marsh or heather plains of rose-colour, know his footfall, know his features; know, perhaps—who can say?—his secret. He is everywhere. He has crept into the very fairy tales of the ‘veillées,’ into the old familiar story of Blue Beard, ‡ into the pagan *conte* of the bride who married Death, and while the farm-dwellers speak of him round the blazing kitchen fire, he may be passing, in snow or rain, the solitary windows where the lamplight streams forth into the darkness. He has his favourite paths, he has his homely needs. His horses must be shod, his reaping-hook must be sharpened, as any reaper’s

* Traditions de la Haute-Bretagne.

† ‘Margot’ is a generic Breton term for ‘fairy.’

‡ See *Voyages vers le Soleil* series. Luzel, ‘Contes populaires de B.-Bretagne.’

in the field of corn or rye, 'mais le forgeron qui a travaillé pour l'Ankou ne travaille plus ensuite pour personne.' His wheel-pins break, and must, like the wheels of common carts, be repaired; and his horses, this time three in number, white of hue, walking in single file, are drawn up, close by the hazel thicket where a lad of Trézélan hides, eager and fearful to see what ensues. Then a branch is cut by one of the dark-clad attendants, and the damage repaired, and through the warm summer night—for it is June, when the moon is full and the air very still—the white horses go on their way down the road, out of sight, and the creak of the ill-oiled wheels dies away in the distance. L'Ankou has passed.*

And if the outward seeming of L'Ankou is fairly consistent of report, he has general moral qualities no less clearly decipherable. He is just. His justice is a proverb in the folk-tales of all countries. In Venice a story of many variants is found told at length. A husbandman, his newborn child in his arms, set out to seek a sponsor. The husbandman is ambitious; he would have a 'just man.' On the highway he meets Christ. To Him the husbandman turns: 'Art thou just?' he asks. 'I do not know,' Christ answers. The father goes further. Presently he meets Madonna. 'Are you just?' again he inquires of her. 'I do not know,' answers Madonna, 'but soon you will meet one who is.' A few steps more and Death comes down the road. 'Are you just?' he questions her (Death here, as in Slav fable, is feminine). 'I am just,' Death replies. 'Christen the child.'

He is also patient. He will not anticipate by one moment man's predestined hour. 'Je vis un homme qui allait et venait, les bras derrière le dos, du pas nonchalant de 'quelqu'un qui attend,' Pierre Le Rûn, travelling tailor, records—nineteen years ago—in one of the most realistic scenes of the book [No. xix]. For some half-hour or more a shadow passes and repasses the window of the room where in the *lit clos* of the Breton kitchen old Marco Hamon, master of the farm, lies dying. Then the hour has come and L'Ankou enters, and the story ends with its sentence of brief, uninsistent sincerity of belief: 'et maintenant vous pouvez m'en croire, moi qui ai vu l'Ankou comme je vous vois: c'est une chose terrible que de mourir.' Yet, patient as he is, he is also punctual.

‘Où est-il, l’homme dont l’heure arrive?’ a farmer passing by a riverside hears a voice ask. Once and once again the question is repeated. And while he wonders—like the unconverted apostle—hearing a voice and seeing no one, a man comes running speechless with haste. And the runner crosses the stream, and crossing falls, and the water closes over him, and the bubbles rise and the runner is dead*—every man comes, though it be with haste, in time for his death. And just, patient, punctual, sometimes even pitiful—‘Pauvre pécheur, je te viens appeler,’ is the gentle summons the folk *ballade* puts into his mouth—L’Ankou is inexorable. God, says Mahometan tradition, when He was about to make man, sent one by one His throne-angels to bring clay from the earth for the fashioning of the human image. But Gabriel, Michael, Israfil, each in turn, listened to the earth’s prayer, and forbore to take of her substance, lest man should bring the curse of his evil deeds upon his mother. Azraël alone, last sent, was deaf to her entreaties, and because he had done the bidding of God without remorse, Azraël was appointed the Angel of Death. L’Ankou is no less remorseless. He may warn those who have befriended him, but he spares none. ‘Ni à Jésus, ni à la Vierge, je n’ai fait grâce’ . . . Ne t’y trompe point, l’ami! Je suis ton plus proche ‘compagnon, celui qui est à ton côté, nuit et jour, n’attendant que l’ordre de Dieu.’ And, to those who mock, his coming is in truth terrible. ‘Qui plaisante avec la Mort trouve à qui parler.’ A strangely savage tinge colours the two legends of those who ventured on that grim pleasantry; a dim reminiscence, too, permeates them of the old doctrine, underlying equally mediæval medicine and mediæval witchcraft, that affirms the vital affinity of all similitudes. The young seminarist stretched beneath the counterfeit shroud between the death tapers, in the story ‘Qui plaisante avec la Mort’; gay Liza, of Faouet, feigning death as a yet untried jest, beneath the eyes of the lover who loves her with a too serious affection—for these, for the girl as for the boy, the assumed semblance becomes the unsought actuality. Charles Glaouier will never attain the priesthood: he lies, where all play-acting has an end, in the cemetery at Tréguier; and Liza’s jests are over—a coffin in the parish of Faouet holds the bride of the over-grave lover.

* See also a curiously similar story told by Prof. Rhys, pp. 243-4 in *Celtic Folk-lore*, where he attributes the voice to a water-spirit possibly demanding a human sacrifice.

And when we pass from the Legends of Death—L'Ankou—to the Legends of the Dead—L'Anaon—there is no change of atmosphere or treatment. Here again the peasant has created his own creed, although in this instance a creed somewhat in consonance with the purgatorial doctrines of the Church concerning a future life. Yet not by any means wholly so, for 'we ought not to believe,' writes Cyril of Alexandria, possibly with the spirit-tenanted tombs of Egypt in his mind, 'as do some infidels, that souls haunt 'their sepulchres.' But that 'les âmes en peine' do haunt not only their sepulchres, but the homes, the fields, the scenes of their former condition of life, is emphatically the Breton peasant's faith. The soul, in his estimation, is not easily banished either from its tenure of the body or from its tenure of the earth. It may be that the very formula of Catholic intercession, a formula as often on the lips as the *Paternoster* or the *Ave*—'May the souls of the faithful, 'through the mercy of God, rest in peace'—has done much, with its veiled suggestion of possible unrest, to infuse new doubts and stimulate old ones concerning the soundness of that unfathomed slumber. Possibly, too, the belief inculcated in the bodily revisits to earth of the beatified saints of Paradise was not calculated to eradicate belief in the revisits in material semblance of the unsanted souls of Purgatory. And, indeed, it is expressly stated in the great Book of Saints of the Middle Ages that St. Gregory himself asserted that souls of sinners do penance in the scenes of their former crimes.* But whether the teaching of St. Cyril or of St. Gregory be accepted, the Breton race—the Celt being of all races the most devoutly Catholic in Christian worship and the most indelibly conservative in its clandestine maintenance of ancient pagan cults—has professed its ineradicable faith in what one may define as the earth-life of the dead.

In countries more immediately subjected to Eastern influence the cult of the dead can, one may guess, be traced to nearer relationship with primitive beliefs. Mr. Abercromby† tells us that amongst the Finns ancient customs and rites involve a belief in what may be called the gradual 'dying of the dead.' They would seem to conceive of the departed soul as lingering near at hand; it might be for but a brief space of days, until the body was

* Légende d'Or, Voragine.

† Abercromby, 'Pre- and Proto-historic Finns.' London.

interred; it might be for a space of years, till all that remained of a man had mouldered to dust in the grave. They imagined it susceptible to pain of cold, to comfort of heat, suffering hunger and thirst and the unsatisfied pangs of lost desires. Thus 'something of the man lived on, but not for ever.' And while that something lived the dead were but semi-dead, and the life beyond this life resolved itself into a life in and about the grave, or into a life occasionally emergent from that underground region called, with a dreary significance of synonyme, 'Tuonela'—the place of the dead, the place of the miserable. In Russia, again, Slav tradition conveys, with modified materialism of faith, an analogous impression of a secondary earth-life of the soul. Mr. Ralston's descriptions of Slav funeral rites and customs recall the 'Banquet at the Tomb' of ancient Egypt, where 'singers sing and dancers dance; the harper 'plays on his harp, bidding the dead man to take his cheer.'* So the Russian mourners, too, invite the dead to share their repast, and when those unseen guests may be supposed to have eaten their fill they are escorted out with reverence by the living. Nor are hunger and thirst the only recognised needs of the dead. In Russia (and in Servia there are traces of the same rite) the girl or youth who dies unmarried is not left in a chill eternity unprovided with what time denied, and the funeral ceremony embraces a post-mortem marriage, ensuring, in that phantom union, wedded companionship in the world of souls.

And the ideas of continued terrestrial vitality perpetuated in such rites and customs, permeate the folk-tales of all times and countries. Innumerable *contes* illustrate the extreme reluctance of the peasant wholly to dissociate the soul from the body. In a large group of stories the continued connexion of one with another is shown in the endowment with vitality of any single relic. The hair, the bone, the blood-drop, remain possessed by life, impregnated with consciousness, and capable of speech.

'They made her arms into a harp,' says a tale of the Faroe Isles, where a girl bride is drowned by a jealous sister, 'and of her yellow hair they—two wandering pilgrims—wove harp-strings—and on their harp they played at the wedding feast of the false sister. And the first string said "The Bride is my sister," and the second said "The Bride slew me," and the third said "The Bridegroom is my betrothed."†

* Ancient Ideals. Henry O. Taylor. New York: 1900.

† See also Le Sifflet qui chante, La Mère Cruelle. Littérature Orale, Picardie.

Nor is the same root-idea far to seek in scores of *märchen* where the life of the dead body is transmuted into the life of tree or bird—as in the familiar almond-tree story of the brothers Grimm. Sang the bird on the almond-branch:—

‘My mother killed me;
My father grieved for me;
My little sister Martine
Wept under the almond-tree.
Kywitt, Kywitt,
What a beautiful bird am I!’

What that ‘something of a man’ was which, severable from the body yet appertaining to the body, survived death it is impossible to define. The ancient Egyptians, who in their cult of the dead occupy something of the same place assigned amongst modern races to the Breton, ‘elaborated ‘in unparalleled detail their notion of a future life.’

‘. . . Their earliest conception was the *Ka* or double, the body’s strength-less equivalent in form. As a basis for its existence the body, or images of the body, must be preserved and the *Ka* had to be fed and lodged. Yet the double was but a poor impotency. So human elements surviving death were given more active powers and grouped together in the conception of a voracious and hawk-like soul, the *Bi*. Finally was added the conception of the *Khou*, according to which the soul was as a pale bluish flame. . . .’*

But it is impossible to detect any such multiplication of personality in the Breton legend where, so far as research has provided the general reader with material for criticism, the modern belief in some such survival has found its clearest and most concentrated expression. For the Breton the dead, ‘*les âmes en peine*,’ constitute a world, or rather a nation apart. His conception of *l’Anaon* (‘*le peuple immense des âmes s’appelle l’Anaon*’) is as definite as his conception of any other neighbouring people—of the peoples of Spain, of Germany, of England. It is a nation with its own laws, its own strictly circumscribed conditions of action and knowledge. Its physical state seems literally that of the unrest the intercessions of the Church appear to deprecate in vain. For whatever may be the lot of those who have finally entered Paradise, for the residue the churchyards of Brittany are no abodes of sleep, or, if of sleep, it is but the troubled repose of the somnambulist. The populace of the dead in truth—save those on whom the gates of hell or heaven have closed—wander at large above-ground. Some there are amongst them who wander with a special purpose.

* Ancient Ideals.

They linger upon earth for the accomplishment of unfulfilled vows, or the reparation of crimes too late repented. Their wandering is in itself a sign of hope. 'Puisque tu reviens, c'est que tu n'est pas damnée,' so the mother of the suicide, Marie Kerfant, greets her ghostly visitant. There are other souls who, by their own deed or from some other cause, have anticipated the hour of destiny. These must needs wait, in an intermediate condition of existence, neither belonging to the dead nor yet to the living, until the time appointed has arrived. 'Priez mon homme,' is the dead wife's request, 'de ne point se remarier avant six ans. *D'ici là il ne sera pas entièrement veuf.*' But over and above these exceptionally circumstanced spirits, for the majority their stay upon earth would seem to be a perfectly natural sequence of a perpetuated existence. And the majority is large. The souls who abide in the meadows and woods and copses are 'aussi pressées que les brins d'herbe dans les champs, ou que les gouttes d'eau dans l'averse.' They are, in truth, everywhere and on every side. By day they lie amongst the bushes of gorse and thorn and broom. They people the fields of clover and corn, they linger on the deserted tracks. The passer-by should bethink him before he enter any coppice where the undergrowth shields him from view, he should be heedful to make some sound, to advertise in some manner his approach, lest coming on them unawares he trouble those poor souls in their retreat. He who goes to cut the corn should likewise not be unmindful of their presence. It is incumbent on him to preface his reaping with the prayer, 'Si l'Anaon est là, paix à son âme.' The night is theirs. Hence the impressive menace of Breton mothers to their children, 'La Nuit va t'emporter,'* 'Leave the night to those to whom it belongs,' a voice cries to the reaper who set forth to reap his field when the day was done. 'Faut laisser la nuit à qui elle appartient,' the warning is urgently reiterated, and this time not in vain. The hours of the night are definitely fixed. The cock is watchman. After the last cock's crow the dead have freedom of the earth, until again, with the crowing of the first cock, the dawn exiles them into their invisibility. But it is not with the crowing of the white nor yet of the grey cock that the true dawn comes:—

'Pour le coup,' says the faithful servant, travelling on a dying master's errand, to his mysterious road-companion, 'l'aube va poindre.'

* Haute-Bretagne, Sébillot.

Pas encore,' replies the other; 'le coq qui a chanté c'est le coq blanc.' A little further and another cock crows. Again ineffectually. It is 'le coq gris!' At length a third makes its voice heard. 'Ah,' fit Ludo, 'cette fois c'est le bon.' 'Oui,' répondit le jeune homme, 'cette fois c'est le coq rouge.' (No. xxix.)

Not only may the dead, between sunset and sunrise, revisit the earth, but during those night hours they may re-enter their old homes. It is not well when evening darkens to sweep the floor, lest with the dust those homeless spiritual vagabonds be cast back into the cold. 'Have joy of the earth!' was the burial *requiescat*, at once courageous and hopeful, of the old Norse poet, but no such joy did the Breton domicile in the grave. 'Les morts ont toujours froid.' Even in the summer nights they crave the warmth of the fireside, and they cluster round the red ashes of St. John's Night fires. 'Ar maro ién,' cold death, is the common phrase. The living do well to leave the embers burning on the hearth, for when all are asleep on the farm the dead crowd near the kindling glow; and on All Souls' Night—it is now a dying custom—the 'Repas des Morts' is laid ready upon the table for the silent guests. And if such customs are becoming things of the past, thoughts, sympathies, beliefs, outstay customs, and the dead still live in the minds of the peasants, appealing for pity, demanding succour, help, compassion; they are even more than the traditional beggars, the *chères pauvres* of the race, and the Breton recognises in death nothing but the forfeiture of joy. For the peasant, those whom the gods love death spares.

Yet pity itself may add to their distress. 'Il ne faut point trop pleurer l'Anaon' is the text of one most pathetic legend of the cycle. It is a legend in which the mortal sadness of human loss is thrust aside while a stronger hand writes, as it were with iron, upon the wall of life that sorrow is a passion of the soul, and, like all passion, is as dross to gold, unmastered and unrestrained. The story—it is one of many upon the same theme—opens with the simplicity of a nursery tale. 'En ce temps-là, il y avait à Coray une fille dont la mère venait de mourir, et qui ne pouvait se consoler de cette perte. Elle ne faisait que pleurer nuit et jour.' 'Can I bring him back again?' For thousands of years Death has negatived the king's question—but 'Je voudrais revoir ma mère' is still the Breton girl's cry to a God who, in Brittany, has methods of procedure with which we men of little faith are un-

acquainted. Moreover, in Brittany the dead are very near at hand. So it fell out that at midnight, kneeling in the silent church, the girl's wish was granted. In the full unwisdom of her grief she sees the procession of the dead as they pace up the nave towards the high altar. Their feet on the pavement make no more sound than do mists crossing the sky. One—a woman—lags behind, the last of the train. She carries a heavy pitcher and bends beneath her load. The girl goes homeward weeping yet more bitterly. It is her mother who is thus burdened. Next night she seeks again the midnight church, to witness the same sight. But this time the water-bearer is bowed to the very ground. She carries not one but two pitchers, and both are full, and her face is dark with anger. 'Qu'avez-vous?' cries the girl. 'Qu'avez-vous que vous paraissez si sombre?' Fiercely the woman turns on her. The burden she bears is a burden of tears. The tears of the living trouble the blessed in their joy, delay the penitent in their expiation, and add a torture to the pains of the damned. The girl goes home. Love dries love's tears, and for love love's sorrow is set aside. 'Avez-vous pleuré, mon enfant?' asks the priest. 'Certes, non; et dorénavant point ne le ferai.' One more vision. A woman, her face shining with celestial felicity, walks burdenless at the head of the souls who mount upwards to the altar of the church of Coray.

In this, in all these stories, between the living and the dead there is but a veil of mist—an illusion of invisibility. And through the mist hand touches hand, and voices, if hushed, are not silenced. And hand and voice are hand and voice familiar and unchanged. For the dead are human as the living are, sometimes kindly, sometimes rancorous and vindictive, capricious, fanciful; somewhat childish too in their doings and in their inability to compass unaided their aims. Their old affections are strong in them. Old Fanchi and his wife, loving their former home of many years, return from their graves—he to guide the plough with a straight hand in the fields where the earth once knew his feet, she tranquilly to tend the house which it had been her pride to order. Side by side in the field, side by side in the farm-kitchen, the living dwell in peace with the dead, and Fanchi, who lies between-whiles in the cemetery, can believe that it is he who in his 'champs d'autrefois' makes the grain spring, and his old wife may no less imagine—a dream of the dead—that it is she, not her living successor,

who conducts the *ménage*. 'Et cela dura ce que Dieu voulut,' ended Marie-Anne Offret as she told the story fifteen years ago.

So one legend follows the other, grim, tragic, pitiful, kindly, or realistically comic, and out of Brittany fantastically gay, as when a vine-dresser of Auvergne is literally assaulted by the flock of unbaptized babies—

'Tous habillés de blanc ils étaient plus petits que les enfants qui venaient de naître, et ils se pressaient autour de lui, en criant de leurs petites voix, "Quoui pas le tien—quoui pas ton pouire, quoui le mien !" ("Ce n'est pas ton parrain, c'est le mien").'

The vine-dresser at once understands their need; scattering water over them he answers, 'Je suis votre parrain à tous, mes enfants.' Wherewith, with cries of 'Grand merci, parrain! grand merci!' the flock disappears. And every story has its distinguishing touch. Now a brief sentence contains an epitome of a belief; when life recedes from Jozon du Guern (No. xxxviii), the robber of a dead girl's *coiffe*, we are only told he dies because 'la mort l'avait regardé de trop près.' Sometimes it is the vivid painting of the scene that stamps itself upon the memory; the interior of a silent room where men watch the dead till dawn, where the candles are extinguished by the bed, where the only light is that of burning resin and the glimmer of the hearth, while the hurricane rages without, and the door, in spite of lock and bolt, stands wide open into the night. Or it may be the distinctness of a landscape effect when under the moon the 'Lavandières de Nuit' bend over the running stream to wash the white linen of their shrouds, or when in the desolate cemetery the cypress trees, planted upon the graves of 'les nobles,' take strange forms like to the shadows of dancing phantoms; or where amongst the shrub-grown hillocks fringing the *landes* the 'Crieur de Nuit,' with his small white hands, repeats between pause and pause his lamentable wail, 'Ma Mère! Ma Mère!' till the belated journeyman, pitiful of heart, is betrayed into response, 'Comment, enfant de la nuit, tu as donc une mère, aussi toi!' At other times the characteristic of the story is some accidental phrase, accentuating the actuality of the whole conception. 'M. Dollo, recteur de Saint-Michel-en-Grève, fut un des prêtres les mieux renseignés sur tout ce qui touche à l'Anaon. Il savait en quelles directions s'étaient dispersées les âmes de tous les morts qu'il avaient enterrés, *sauf deux*.' The touch—it is only a touch, for no explanation is offered concerning those solitary

exceptions—is graphically significant, it is one of those details which brand imagination with reality.

So the narratives remain, in the mind of the reader, clear and emphatic. There is no monotony. The souls are not phantoms, ghosts, spectres, pale neutralities whom death has swept into a featureless routine of existence. They are, we repeat, men, women, children, changed, it may be, in form (the East echoes itself in transformations to semblances of bird, butterfly, mouse, and flower), but persistent in individuality, in affections, in the simplicity of the peasant, in the childishness, with a superadded helplessness, of human life at large. Death has only changed life's *venue*. And the attitude of sentiment in the living is equally consistent. It is an attitude of reverence—'la mort est sainte'—and, for the most part, of fear. And over and above fear and reverence, the note dominating both is one of a passionate pity, in which hope finds little place. Never has grief merged in compassion found more acute expression than in 'la poignante et sauvage tristesse des hymnes de la mort en Basse-Bretagne,' says M. Marillier, and amongst the 'cris d'enterrement' of another province* are two laments which, as embodying that sorrow of two faces—the sorrow of the living for their loss, the sorrow *for* the dead as being dead—stand, amongst folk-songs, almost alone in the extremity of their pathos:—

Pour un Mari.

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Pauvre Jean ! | Quand j'étais jeune fille, |
| Pauvre Jean, pauvre Jean. | Beau temps il y a, |
| Mon Dieu ! | Mon Dieu ! |
| Tu es mort, | Je n'ai jamais voulu que toi. |
| Tu es mort ! Tu es mort ! | Mon Dieu, mon Dieu ! |
| Mon Dieu ! | |
| Tu m'as laissée toute seule, | Ah ! |
| Pauvre Jean. | Mon beau temps est fini, |
| Ah ! | Pauvre, |
| | Pauvre Jean ! |
| Tu le savais pourtant que je | Je te ferai dire des Messes, |
| t'aimais, | Pauvre, |
| Pauvre Jean ! | Pauvre Jean ! |
| Jamais je ne t'ai dit 'Non,' | |
| Jamais, jamais. | |
| Jamais je ne t'ai fait d'affront, | |
| Ni toi non plus à moi, | |
| Jamais, jamais. | |
| Ah ! | |

* See 'Poésies Populaires de la Gascogne.' Bladé. Paris : 1881.

Pour un Enfant.

| | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Ah ! | Pauvret, |
| Mon Dieu ! | Je ne te reverrai |
| Pauvret. | Jamais, jamais, |
| Mon Dieu, mon Dieu ! | Jamais. |
| Pauvret, | Te t'en vas |
| Ah ! | Et je demeure. |
| | Mon Dieu ! |
| Pauvret, | Pauvret, |
| Tu étais bien jeunet, | Ah ! |
| Pourtant tu gagnais déjà ta vie. | Tu seras bien seulet |
| Pauvret, | Au cimetière |
| Ah, | Cette nuit. |
| Mon Dieu ! | Et moi |
| | Je te pleurerai |
| Pauvret, | A la maison. |
| Tu es mort. | Mon Dieu, |
| Ils t'emportent au cimetière, | Ah ! |
| La croix devant, | |
| Ils t'emportent en terre. | |
| Mon Dieu ! | |

Reading these, it is but small wonder the warning should be so often reiterated throughout popular literatures—'Il ne faut point trop pleurer l'Annon.'

Seen from one point of view, such is, so far as anything but the perusal of the legends themselves can give it, the conception of Death and the Dead of the Celtic peasant, as recorded by M. Le Braz, and faintly shadowed in the miscellaneous *contes* of other provinces of France. How much the continual preoccupation with death is stimulated by the image, always before the eyes of the Catholic peasant, of the dead Christ, how far the wayside Calvary and the altar crucifix, how far Christianity, by its perpetual presentation of a God who dies, has affected 'l'âme chantante et triste de la Bretagne,' can only be conjectured. Whether such constant preoccupation be well for a race, seeing that for all his days save one the business of a man is to live and not to die, is a question again which each will answer according to his own temperament and creed. One example of a group of *contes* might be interpreted as an indication that even in the opinion of the peasant the engrossing contemplation of that mystery might result in the suspension of all human effort. At Saint-Cast there is a building by name 'La Tour de Cesson.' It was christened in the following legend:—

'Un jour la Fée qui faisait construire la tour aperçut sur sa route une pie morte. "Pourquoi cet oiseau ne bouge-t-il pas ?" demanda la Fée. "C'est qu'il est mort," lui répondit-on. "Ah," dit la Fée, "puisqu'on meurt dans ce pays-ci, cessons."'

Was there a question in the minds of those amongst whom such legends rose that, were the moral of the dead magpie too logically pursued, all the edifices, spiritual or substantial, that men's ambitions, loves, and hates have ever reared from Babel onwards, might, like the tower of Saint-Cast, remain incomplete, 'puisqu'on meurt dans ce 'pays-ci'? However this may be, the significant fact remains that it is to the abstract mystery of Death that the human instinct of folk-tales has given both embodiment and personality, and that Birth is passed by, as a visitant whose comings and goings are unseen and unheard in the homes of men, whose mystery of existence is as remote from man's imaginative realisation as that of an unincarnate god.

ART. VI.—1. *The Nearer East.* By D. G. HOGARTH, M.A. London: Heinemann. 1902.

2. *Khurassan and Sistan.* By Lieut.-Colonel C. E. YATE, C.S.I., C.M.G. Blackwood & Sons, Edinburgh and London: 1900.

3. *Turkey: Diplomatic and Consular Reports, 1901.* ‘Suggestions for British Traders.’

4. *Turkey: Diplomatic and Consular Reports, 1899–1900.* ‘Trade of Constantinople for the Years.’

5. *Persia: Diplomatic and Consular Reports, 1900.* ‘Trade of the Persian Gulf for the Year.’

6. *Persia: Diplomatic and Consular Reports, 1899–1900.* ‘Trade of Khorassan.’

7. *Persia: Diplomatic and Consular Reports, 1900.* ‘Trade of Azerbaijan.’

‘OUR policy is the integrity of Persia. . . . We are ‘anxious for the integrity of Persia, but we are ‘anxious far more for the balance of power; and it would ‘be impossible for us, *whatever the cause*, to abandon what ‘we look upon as our rightful position in Persia. . . . That ‘is true not only of the Persian Gulf, but of the Southern ‘provinces of Persia, and especially of those provinces ‘which border on our Indian Empire. Our rights there ‘and our position of ascendancy we cannot abandon.’*

Such an announcement, made with evident deliberation by the official spokesman of the Foreign Office in the House of Commons, is highly significant, and may involve important consequences. It does not indicate any new departure in policy; on the contrary, it reaffirms in explicit language as the basis of future action the principles which have always been understood to govern British statesmanship in the past. It will be welcomed as a guarantee of continuity by all who, with Lord Rosebery, recognise such continuity to be the first and most indispensable condition of effective diplomacy, though one not easily reconciled with democratic forms of government. It will be noted as an emphatic warning by Continental Powers, who might otherwise be tempted to interpret the irresponsible utterances of a section of the press as an indication of public apathy, or

* Lord Cranborne, Debates of House of Commons, January 22, 1902.

even as a quasi-official invitation to them to seize the opportunity of realising, by a *coup d'état*, the objects of a long-cherished but hitherto impracticable ambition.

The spasmodic character of such attention as the general public at home is pleased to bestow upon questions affecting their interests in the East is nowhere better illustrated than in the case of Persia. Until Lord Curzon published his monumental book, which, as a mine of information and an exhaustive survey of trade and international relations, will long remain, as its author hoped, the standard work on the subject, few possessed or could without infinite labour acquire any substantial or reliable knowledge of the country or its problems. A casual visit of the Shah with his pink-tailed horses might evoke a passing curiosity, and revive in the cultured mind recollections of the mythical exploits and wild adventures of Hajji Baba or Sir Henry Layard; but we should search the records of Parliament and the columns of the press in vain for any adequate recognition of the vital issues involved in the policy and sympathies of our illustrious guest. To leading journals like the 'Times,' for which Lord Curzon acted as special correspondent, and to recent travellers, among whom may be mentioned General Gordon and Colonel Yate, we are indebted for much subsequent information and criticism, which has served to stimulate and enlighten public opinion; and the admirable reports drawn up by the consuls in the principal commercial centres of Persia have placed within the reach of all who care to study them ample materials for forming a competent judgement on the trade aspects of the problem. It is, therefore, a surprising and, to the vast majority of those who have an intimate and personal acquaintance with the political and strategic questions involved, a melancholy circumstance that during the last few months a chorus of contributors to the daily papers and periodicals should have gravely advocated a complete revision or repudiation of the policy which has hitherto been accepted without question or challenge by every Administration, Liberal as well as Conservative.

The discussion which took place in the House of Commons on January 22 shows, at all events, that such views are not reflected or countenanced by any material section of opinion in that assembly. One Liberal member only was bold enough to dispute the interpretation which his colleague put upon the terms of the motion he introduced, and Lord Cranborne's assurance that his Majesty's Government is

desirous to maintain the *status quo* in Persia and the Persian Gulf, amplified by the categorical assertion, in answer to a question on January 24, that its maintenance was incompatible with the occupation by any Power of a port in the Southern waters, was accepted without a division or even a verbal protest. We may assume, therefore, and the Government have a right to claim, that any steps which may become necessary in the future to enforce that policy will receive the patriotic assent and support of both political parties.

It may, indeed, be urged that the Under-Secretary's statement is susceptible of two interpretations, and that while it leaves us in no doubt as to the meaning which the Government attach to the term 'the *status quo*,' it does not pledge them to resist action on the part of other Powers which may be founded on a different reading. Russia and Germany might still put in a claim for certain concessions which might be made the subject of compromise by any British Government without modifying even the letter of Lord Cranborne's declaration. We are familiar with the diplomatic distinction between the terms 'occupation,' 'lease,' and 'usufruct'; and in spite of all the incidents which have occurred in China since 1898—the 'leasing' of 'Port Arthur to Russia, of Kiaochau to Germany, and of Wei-hai-Wei to ourselves—his Majesty's Government would, no doubt, again adopt, with perfect sincerity and an unshaken belief in the consistency and continuity of their policy, the identical terms of Sir Ellis Ashmead Bartlett's resolution in the spring of that year, by which the House pledged itself to maintain the integrity of the Chinese Empire.

We may admit at once that no Government who have determined upon a change of policy will be deterred from putting their views into execution by expressions, however definite, employed by their predecessors in office. The utmost we can expect is that those who are at the moment responsible for the conduct of affairs should take every reasonable precaution to make their intentions clear to the foreign nations most directly concerned, and to the public, upon whose intelligent support they must ultimately rely in the event of a crisis. But the conduct of Lord Salisbury's Administration in regard to China, though it may naturally awaken misgivings, does not present any real analogy or ground of inference as to their probable conduct in regard to Persia. In the former case, Mr. Balfour's invitation to Russia during the autumn of 1897 to come down to an ice-free port

on the Yellow Sea might, not unreasonably, be cited as a proof that they never regarded such an eventuality as incompatible with the maintenance of Chinese integrity. In the present case they have spontaneously announced that the intrusion of any Power upon the Persian Gulf would be regarded by them as an infringement, not of Persian independence, but of British interests—or, in other words, as an ‘unfriendly’ act. To volunteer such a statement unless they were prepared to face the possible consequences, as they faced them in the parallel case of Fashoda, would be an act of unpardonable and almost incredible folly. If the conduct of our diplomacy in relation to questions of a delicate character pending between ourselves and the Russian Government has been open to criticism in the past, its errors have consisted, not in receding from positions deliberately adopted, but in postponing the necessity for disagreeable decisions by taking refuge in a non-committal attitude and a studiously vague phraseology. Such a method may justly be deprecated, on the ground that it provokes our Continental rivals to presume upon a forbearance of which they cannot gauge the limits; but it has at least this negative merit, that it avoids arousing expectations at home which, once excited, are not easily allayed. To issue, on the other hand, a warning against trespassers which you have not the means or the intention of enforcing is to destroy all respect for your authority abroad, while it may at the same time compel you to seek compensations, in themselves undesirable, as the only means of rehabilitating your credit and prestige in the eyes of a jealous and disappointed electorate.

Whatever differences of opinion there may be upon other points between those who advocate a compromise with Russia and those who desire to preserve the *status quo*, all are agreed that a general scramble for Persian territory would be in the highest degree deplorable. We have no desire to burden ourselves with new proprietary rights or administrative duties in that quarter, and the possession of a naval base, which would be forced upon us as a precautionary measure by the creation of European ownership in a sphere where we have hitherto enjoyed a monopoly of influence, would entail upon the British and Indian taxpayers an additional financial burden without in any way increasing the security which we possess under present conditions.

We assume, therefore, that Lord Cranborne’s words are to be taken not as a pious opinion, but as a pledge by which

the Government will hold themselves bound. It is evident that their ability to redeem that pledge will depend on the preparations they make in the meantime, and on the attitude they adopt towards the Persian Government and the Continental Powers. We shall find it convenient to examine the last, involving, as it does, considerations of a general character, before we proceed to investigate the narrower field of Persian diplomacy.

The only two Powers whose position and designs render them factors in the situation of which we are obliged to take account are at present Russia and Germany. Neither has any vested interests of appreciable magnitude in the regions bordering on the Persian Gulf, but both are supposed to be desirous of creating them. Russia, although nearer to the scene of operations, has taken no overt steps as yet to gratify her desire; Germany, as the temporary leaseholder of a small line in the North-West of Anatolia, has already obtained a concession enabling her to lay her rails across the intervening tract of more than one thousand miles which lies between her present terminus at Konia and some, as yet undetermined, point upon the Eastern seaboard. It is with her, therefore, that we are most immediately concerned, and whatever attitude we may assume towards her will naturally form a precedent in determining our attitude towards her Northern competitor. No distinction is drawn between the two cases in the official statement we have quoted, nor would it be rational to relax, in favour of that claimant which possesses the advantage in naval resources, a prohibition justified only by the imperative necessity of preserving the balance of power.

If, as some have suspected, an agreement or tacit understanding exists between the Cabinets of London and Berlin, it cannot rest upon any compromise of this nature, and the sudden abandonment of the proposed Koweit terminus by the German promoters is a symptom of which it is easy to appreciate the significance. The question whether such an agreement is or is not desirable must be argued on wider grounds, affecting the international relations of Europe and the interests of the Turkish Empire.

It can hardly be denied that from the latter point of view, at all events, the construction of the Euphrates Valley Railway would be of immense advantage. Whether the traffic or passenger receipts would repay the cost of construction or management, whatever may be the route finally agreed upon, is, indeed, highly problematical. Should the

path of least resistance be followed, *viâ* Adana and Aleppo and across the desert from Urfa to Mosul, it will not tap the largest centres of population and industry; while the alternative mountainous line by Marash, Birejik, Diarbekr, and Mardin will require engineering of a formidable and costly character. From Mosul southward it would probably keep to the right bank of the Tigris, in order to avoid the necessity of bridging the successive tributaries of the Greater and Lesser Zab, the Diyala and the smaller streams north of Bagdad. Even so, however, it would be exposed to constant attacks from predatory roving bands of Shammar Arabs, and its prolongation southward or eastward would be attended with difficulties of no mean order. The country between the right bank and the Euphrates, which contains the relics of all the famous sites of Chaldean history, is but little cultivated, and inhabited by an unruly and nomad population; while the transference of the line to the left bank, with a view to its extension to the Persian frontier at Khannikin, would entail the spanning of the Tigris in its broader reaches. Moreover, it is to be expected, and certainly to be hoped, that the opening up of railway communication will be accompanied or followed by the concession of larger facilities for inland navigation between the southern capitals of Bussorah and Bagdad and the populous centres of Mosul and Diarbekr. Such concessions would do much to develop trade and encourage cultivation in the vast and neglected tracts of Mesopotamia, but their effect could hardly be otherwise than prejudicial to the interests of the railway. Experience has shown conclusively that land transport cannot, under equal conditions, compete successfully with carriage by water, and the disappointing results of the Nisch-Salonika and of the Dedeagatch-Salonika railways are not likely to be ignored by the promoters of the new Asiatic line. An additional and convincing proof that they do not feel any confidence in the financial prospects of their scheme is their insistence upon a heavy kilometric guarantee which will render them independent of traffic receipts.

At the same time, the acceptance of such a burdensome liability by an exchequer already on the verge of bankruptcy affords a suggestive clue to the motives which have actuated the Turkish Government in sanctioning the plans which have been laid before them. We have said that the extension of the railway system through the heart of their Asiatic dominions will eventually benefit the country and

its inhabitants, even if it does not prove remunerative to the company or to the Treasury. At first, no doubt, it will operate as a tax upon the population, necessitating increased severity in the collection of tithes, upon which the guarantees are secured. Moreover, as Mr. Hogarth points out, in one of the most comprehensive and suggestive treatises ever published upon the Near East as a whole, the effect even of roads in ill-governed lands is to encourage a predatory spirit in the rural districts, and the primary result of an extension of railways in Anatolia has always been an extension of brigandage. Ultimately, however, it will give an impetus to agriculture and industry, it will facilitate the exploitation of valuable mineral resources, and enable the police and the military to deal more promptly and decisively than is now possible with organised sedition or disorder. These considerations have probably been present to the minds of the authorities, but they are not the only or even the principal ones which have influenced their decision. They must be painfully conscious of the fact that the amounts paid by them on the guaranteed railways in Anatolia have risen from 315,716*l.* in 1897 to 815,399*l.* in 1899, while the receipts have steadily declined in proportion. Had they consulted their pecuniary interests, they would assuredly have entrusted the execution of their new project to the English company which works the line between Smyrna and Aidin, the only one which not only pays its way without any subvention, but is actually their creditor to the extent of 650,000*l.* Instead of doing so, they have entrusted it to a syndicate which, in order to prevent competition and to divert traffic from its natural course, has severed its connexion with the Smyrna-Cassaba line at Afium-Kara Hissar, and is about to invade the districts already supplied by the Adana-Messina Railway. The truth is that, for the Turkish Government, the question of railways is, and must be, mainly a question of military strategy and self-defence. The events of the Greek war of 1897, and the incalculable service performed by the Adrianople-Salonica line in conveying the Anatolian levies to the front within an incredibly short interval after the rupture of negotiations, at once opened the eyes of the Sultan and of even the most reactionary Turks to the paramount importance of such facilities as a condition of rapid and effective mobilisation.

In an article contributed to the 'Journal of the Royal 'United Service Institution' in September, 1899, Colonel Mark Bell, whose authority on military matters is undoubted,

has drawn an elaborate and masterly survey of the strategic deficiencies and requirements of Turkey's Asiatic frontier. It is unnecessary to examine his plan of operations in detail; we will content ourselves with stating concisely the conclusions at which he arrives, and the grounds upon which they are based. He points out that the natural line of defence, from the Black Sea to the Persian Gulf, runs in a south-easterly direction, partly on Turkish and partly on Persian territory, between the towns Samsun, Sivas, Kharput, Mosul, Kirind, Dizful, and Bushire on the west, and the parallel towns Trebizond, Erzerum, Bitlis, Suj Bulak, Hamadan, Gulpaigan, and Shiraz on the east. This zone he divides roughly into two sections, by an imaginary line drawn through Bitlis, Kharput, and Van. The northern belt, forming the 'offensive' zone, to which he assigns three-fourths of the fighting strength of Turkey-in-Asia, and having for its base the lines connecting Mardin with the Black Sea and the Mediterranean,* is 'a region of grassy mountains and hills, fertile undulations and rich agricultural valleys, generally difficult for military operations, with a climate for four months of the year of a severity to almost prohibit them, and traversed by few and difficult roads,' but, nevertheless, including in its area the rich corn-growing districts of Erzerum, Passin, Khanis, Bulanik, Mush, and Alashgerd.

The southern, or 'defensive' zone, in which the remaining fourth of the army would operate, and for which the Mardin-Bagdad line would supply the necessary base, consists of the main watershed of Armenia and Persia, 'a mountainous country, difficult to traverse except by hill-paths, suited to pack-transport only, and closed by snow for four or five months in the year; inhabited by unruly tribes, practically free of control, chiefly nomads, and subservient only in name to either Turkey or Persia.'

The Russian attack may be delivered either from the side of Kars and Erivan upon Erzerum and Bayazid, which command the passes to Van; or upon Van itself, the key to the Mesopotamian lowlands, from Khoi, Tabriz, Snj Bulak,

* A. Offensive zone.

Primary bases, Mediterranean and Black Seas.

Secondary bases, Samsun, Tokat, Sivas, Mardin.

B. Defensive zone.

Primary bases, Mediterranean and Persian Gulf.

Secondary bases, Iskanderun, Sowaidiya, Tripoli, Urfa, Mardin, Mosul, Bagdad, Kerimanshah, and Burujird.

or Sahna. In the former case the invaders would be acting from a base within their own territory, and the Turks, except in the highly improbable event of a Turco-Persian alliance, would be compelled to rely upon their own resources. In order, therefore, to enable them to occupy effectively the Samsun-Bagdad position, Colonel Bell proposes the construction of two main lines: (1) starting from Iskanderun or some neighbouring port on the Mediterranean, and proceeding *viâ* Aleppo, Birejik and Urfa, (2) running from the northern port of Samsun through Tokat, Sivas, Kharput, and Diarbekr so as to join the western line at Mardin. In order to complete the chain, branch lines would also be required from Sivas *viâ* Erzingian to Erzerum (a point already connected by an admirable military road with Trebizond and Baiburt), and from Kharput *viâ* Mush and Bitlis to Van.

There is, however, a possibility, and even a probability, that the Russians would make a simultaneous advance upon the Tigris or Karun plains from the regions in the vicinity of Lake Urmi. In this case Persian territory would be violated, and the arena of conflict immeasurably extended. The defensive force would be deployed along the Kermanshah-Burujird-Hamadan line, so as to protect the passes westward through Kurdistan and southward through the Lur, Bakhtiari, and Kashgai hills; and its base would extend from the Tigris at Bagdad to the Karun ports, Shuster and Mohammerah. In view of such a contingency, Colonel Bell recommends three precautionary measures: (1) the prolongation of the Mediterranean-Black Sea line from Mardin through Jezireh to the right bank of the Tigris at Mosul, and thence across the river *viâ* Arbil Kirkuk, Kifri, Bagdad, Khanikin, Kermanshah, Burujird, Gulpaigan, and Khonsar to Isfahan; (2) the opening of the Karun to navigation as far as Shuster; (3) the construction of a railway from Shuster to the foot of the hills north of Dizful, and a cart road through Khoremmabad to Kermanshah and Burujird.

Now, in the light of such a scheme as this, the recent actions of Germany, Russia, and Turkey become easily intelligible. Germany, anxious to find new markets and outlets for her rapidly increasing trade and population, demands the concession for a railway which will open out to commerce, and perhaps to colonisation, the vast alluvial basins of the Tigris and Euphrates. Turkey, not greatly solicitous for the well-being of that congeries of races over which she rules, but keenly desirous of preserving intact the

remains of her imperial heritage and prestige, sanctions the construction of that very Mediterranean line—not the most ideal from a commercial standpoint, but having an outlet on the bay of Alexandretta, as well as at Haidar Pasha—which Colonel Bell describes as essential to the protection of the northern frontier zone. At once Russia steps forward, and extorts from the Sultan a pledge that in no circumstances will he concede to any foreign Power, other than herself, a priority of right for the construction of railways in the provinces bordering on the southern shores of the Black Sea. The effect of this pledge is obviously to render impossible the completion of the general scheme of defence by preventing the connection by rail at Mardin of the Mediterranean with the Black Sea base of Samsun. In the event of war, even if the Russian navy lost control of its waters, the shores of the Euxine would be rendered useless to Turkey for the purpose of sending up reinforcements, and the only alternative still left open to her would be to prolong the Haidar Pasha-Angora line to Sivas, and thence eastward *via* Erzingian to Erzerum, and southward through Malatia, Kharput and Diarbekr to Mardin.

Lastly, Russia has prepared the way for an advance from the Persian side by pushing forward the Kars-Batum Railway in the direction of Erivan, as a preliminary step to the construction of a further section to Julfa or Shahtakti, and thence to Tabriz, Kusvin, and Teheran, for which plans and maps have already been made by Russian engineers within the last three years. Meantime, by the agreement of 1889, renewed for a further period of ten years in 1900 (an agreement similar to that which she imposed upon the Sultan), she has obtained from the Shah a practical power of vetoing the construction by foreign lessees of any new railways in Persia during that interval. Consequently she has succeeded by sheer diplomacy in not only maiming the strategical scheme of Turkey in the 'offensive' zone, but also in altogether destroying the possibility of preparation and co-operation by Persia in the southern, or 'defensive,' zone.

The very success of her policy, therefore, and the scarcely veiled designs which have inspired it, render doubly imperative in the interests of Turkey the rapid completion of the Euphrates Valley line. As soon as that line reaches Bagdad we are brought face to face with the question of its prolongation to some point upon the Persian Gulf, where we are anxious that no foreign Power should obtain a foothold. To prohibit such an extension is clearly impossible,

and we certainly can derive nothing but advantage from an enterprise which will give fresh impetus to the import and export trade, whereof we hold the preponderating share. Besides, however remote may be the probability that we shall ever again place an army in the field for the sake of Turkish independence, it cannot be denied that in certain contingencies we might find it very convenient to possess a readier means of access to Bagdad than is at present afforded by the weekly service of Messrs. Lynch's steamboats. The simplest and most obvious solution of the difficulty is surely to be found in an arrangement between ourselves, the Turkish Government, and the German contractors, by the terms of which the responsibility for the construction and management of the Bagdad-Gulf section would be assigned to Great Britain. In order to raise the money required for the guarantee the Turkish Government would doubtless find it convenient to alter the scale of the Customs tariff, and our consent to its revision ought certainly not to be accorded except on the basis of a friendly and generous reciprocity.

We are under no delusion as to the sentiments which Germany entertains towards us. She is, with the single exception of the United States, our most formidable commercial competitor. She desires, not unnaturally, to supplant us and to seize what we have come to regard as our birthright. However friendly to us at heart, her statesmen are always ready, for the sake of obtaining the sanction of the Reichstag for their increased naval expenditure, to conciliate the opposition of both the Socialist and Agrarian factions by playing on the popular feelings of jealousy and animosity to Great Britain; and her diplomatists still fondly imagine that they divert attention from their own schemes by fomenting the mutual suspicions of London and St. Petersburg. All this may be an excellent reason for declining anything in the nature of a treaty with Germany or the Triple Alliance; but it is wholly irrelevant to the question of our co-operation with her in the neutral field of commercial or industrial development. If we countenance or assist the construction of the Euphrates Valley Railway, we do so partly in the interests of our own trade, and partly in the interests of the native population, over whose well-being we, as one of the signatories of the Berlin and Cyprus Conventions, have pledged ourselves to watch. The very fact emphasised by Mr. Hogarth, that Ottoman nervousness on the score of an inferior strategic position about the head waters of the Euphrates is largely responsible for the policy

pursued towards the peoples of the highlands, indicates the direction in which our policy may be shaped with the greatest advantage to them. Russia has no reason or right to infer that such action on our part implies hostility to herself, and she will share equally with ourselves in any opportunities for trade which may result from the new conditions. On the other hand, as Germany increases the volume of her trade on the Shat el Arab and Tigris, she will have greater incentives to combine her influence with ours at Constantinople in order to secure the removal of innumerable obstacles which at present hopelessly impede the free circulation of traffic. The absurd restrictions upon the number of river-steamers plying between Bussorah and Bagdad already result in a normal accumulation at the lower port of several thousand tons of merchandise annually; the Custom-house accommodation is, to quote Mr. Wratishaw, 'ludicrously inadequate,' and the quarantine regulations against India and Persia, which 'considerably increase the expenses of steamers, and render the operations of loading and unloading cargo tedious and difficult,' are imposed without corresponding or simultaneous precautions against the entry of either passengers or goods along the entire line of land frontier. When these vexatious and unnecessary hindrances have been withdrawn, it may be possible at last to press for the tardy realisation of the dreams of Chesney and Ainsworth, to throw open to navigation the Euphrates as far as Birejik, and the Tigris as far as Mosul or Diarbekr, and to arrest the perpetual subsidence of the river banks, and the overflow and filtration of the fertilising floods into the marshes.

We now turn to consider the alternative policy, which has lately found so many ardent advocates—the policy of an understanding with Russia.

It is, perhaps, worth our while to observe that, whereas the question of our relations with Germany is one which mainly concerns the future of Turkey, that of our relations with Russia concerns mainly, though, as we have shown, not exclusively, the future of Persia. The first, moreover, is determined by considerations of a purely commercial character; the issues involved in the second are to a great extent, if not entirely, political. Germany's objects are those of the trader and emigrant; Russia's are notoriously concentrated on the acquisition of territory, or at least of a port upon the Persian Gulf. It follows, then, that the policy enunciated by Lord Cranborne, while it need be no bar to our cordial

co-operation with Germany, is wholly incompatible with the realisation of Muscovite ambitions. In other words, our interests, or what we have always considered to be our interests, if not identical, at least do not conflict with those of Germany; they are confessedly irreconcilable with those of Russia.

It is, of course, conceivable (and this is the hypothesis upon which writers like 'A. B. C.' in the 'National Review' rest their case) that a friendly understanding with the Slavonic Power would ensure for us such substantial advantages, and such an additional sense of security, that for the sake of securing it we ought to revise our traditional interpretation of British interests. Before we can pronounce upon a bargain of this kind it is necessary to inquire what are the precise terms suggested, the relative advantages supposed to accrue to the parties concerned, and the practical prospects of their ever being realised. The last question, which is of vital importance, cannot be answered with any certainty unless we first ascertain the real views and aims of the Russian Government. If, as Lord Crauborne says, 'it does not become us to go, cap in hand, to other Powers 'begging for alliances,' still less is it incumbent upon us to volunteer concessions which have never been asked for, and for which we should naturally expect a substantial return.

In the absence, therefore, of any reliable information upon this point, we can only argue the problem upon general grounds. One fact, however, is patent—that we cannot, even if we wished to do so, use an Anglo-Russian *entente* for the purpose of checkmating Germany in the East. To our present policy of maintaining the *status quo*, and crying 'Hands off!' to every other Power in the Persian Gulf, there is only one possible alternative, and that is to throw its shores open to all. We cannot concede to Russia a port or naval base separated by nearly a thousand miles from her territory, and refuse it to a German company which is bringing its railway to the sea. The Persian Gulf must be either a British lake, as the Black Sea and the Caspian are Russian lakes, or, like the Mediterranean, the base and manœuvring-ground of international fleets. If, therefore, as we shall attempt to prove, Russia's objects are political and strategic rather than commercial, the effect of their gratification upon British and Indian interests will be intensified by the effects of corresponding advantages secured in the same quarter by all the European Powers.

We do not ourselves attach much intrinsic importance to

the controversy whether the outlet which Russia desires is a commercial emporium or a naval arsenal. The possession of a harbour and coaling-station necessarily implies a right on the part of the owner to fortify and enlarge it for the protection of trade, or for the repair of cruisers which convoy its merchant shipping in time of war. Under whatever pretext, therefore, the occupation took place, it would certainly be accompanied by the occupation of a similar post of 'vantage by Great Britain. The consequences to ourselves are not difficult to foresee. Our position would be no stronger, and might be weaker than it is now; it would entail large defence works, and a material addition to our fleet in those waters; and the cost would be acutely felt and justly resented by the taxpayers both in India and at home. At the same time, our action would be attributed by the native populations under our rule, and by the friendly tribes of Southern Persia, to timidity and fear of Russia; and the loss of our prestige would be followed by a general unrest and disturbance throughout the hinterland, which would provoke, and might necessitate, active intervention by Russia and ourselves.

Nor is it possible to separate the question of a port on the Gulf from the question of a railway connecting it with Russian territory. If, as is alleged, the dominant object of the Czar's advisers, and especially of De Witte, is to obtain uninterrupted passage and egress for their trade, a port without a railway would clearly be useless. Now the only line which has been lately discussed in this connexion is one from the Trans-Caspian border at Askhabad, *via* Meshed and Kerman, to Bunder Abbas. We agree with the able writer in the January number of the 'Quarterly Review,' that 'it is not likely that this idea has yet been seriously 'entertained,' for the reason, given by Major Yate,* that such a line would encounter the 'endless succession of 'mountain terraces that run east and west between Meshed 'and Bunder Abbas.' In any case, its construction would admittedly affect the whole problem of Indian defence, and entail new and expensive precautions on the south-west frontier. From her present base at Kushk, although within fifty miles of Herat, Russia has still to surmount obstacles which, in the opinion of many military experts, are almost prohibitive before she can deliver an effective attack upon India. Established in the great corn-growing plains of

* Empire Review, January 1902.

Khorassan, with an uninterrupted line of communications as far as the Caspian behind her, she would be able to strike either at Herat or at Kandahar from the Meshed and Sistan bases, while British Beluchistan and Quetta would lie open to a flank attack by the Kuh Malek Siah-Nushki caravan road, without the necessity for any violation of Afghan territory.

The only other through lines which might be contemplated are those connecting Isfahan with the Tiflis Railway, *via* Teheran and Tabriz, on the one hand, and with the Trans-Caspian railway, *via* Teheran and Meshed, on the other. They would not be open to the same objections, and there is, so far as we can see, no reason why they should not be built, subject to the same conditions in regard to the sections south of Isfahan as we have discussed in the case of the German railway south of Bagdad. Their natural termini would be either at Bunder Abbas or Mohammerah, and the difference in proximity of the latter port to India would not materially affect the strategic and financial considerations which we have already urged against a Russian occupation of the former. Whether the motive for desiring such an occupation be commercial or political is, we repeat, or ought to be, a question immaterial to our own decision. That it has, however, an essential bearing on the possibility and value of a general Anglo-Russian agreement cannot be denied. The demand of a stranger for a right of way which leads direct to your own front door is naturally suspect, and all the more so if in order to facilitate his claim he has begun by appropriating the property of your intimate friend. Every argument, therefore, which tends to show that the ultimate absorption of Persia by Russia is inevitable is *pro tanto* a demonstration of the uselessness of an Anglo-Russian *entente*. Our approval of this wholesale plunder of our neighbour might, no doubt, render the process easier and more agreeable, but with or without our assent the result would be the same. What motive, then, have we to connive at an operation which is certainly of doubtful morality, and may involve danger to ourselves? Is it merely that we may purchase the general good will of Russia in various parts of the world, or is there some tangible *quid pro quo* for which it is worth our while to pay such a price?

We agree with Sir Edward Grey that, of the three possible policies—inveterate and unyielding hostility to Russian expansion, opposition followed by graceful concessions, and compromise founded on mutual interests in Asia as a

whole—the last is decidedly the most preferable. But is it also practicable? No statesman worthy of the name would think of reshaping our entire Imperial policy merely for the sake of establishing a platonic affection which might or might not be permanent, and we know of no disputes between the two Powers in any quarter which are susceptible of settlement on general principles. In Egypt our position is not seriously challenged, and the small advantage to be gained by conciliating a single member of the Debt Commission in Cairo would certainly be more than counter-balanced by the menace to communications between the Nile and India entailed by the presence of a Russian war fleet in the Persian Gulf. Or, again, if we transfer our investigations to Northern China, the interests of our own trade at Newchwang are already secured by treaty, and the political future of Manchuria or Korea is not a subject about which we could barter, even if we were willing to do so, without alienating the respect and valuable friendship of our new ally, Japan.

It does not, however, follow that, because we have nothing to gain from a general agreement, we should therefore oppose the legitimate and commercial instincts of Russia. She has a right to demand access for her goods by the shortest and most convenient route through the territories which lie between her and the open sea; nor should we do otherwise than welcome the introduction into Persia, by Russia or any other Power, of facilities which would bring our own goods nearer to the markets of the interior. In point of fact, the difficulty is not that she wishes to construct railways of which we disapprove, but that she refuses to allow the construction of any railways at all. Even the territory south of the Caucasus, which she won from Turkey during the last war, remains largely undeveloped; and while money and colonists are poured into Siberia or Central Asia, the soil is hardly better cultivated, the villages are almost as few and poor in the tracts round Kars and Erivan as on the Turkish side of the frontier. In Trans-Caspia she has, indeed, made strenuous efforts to push her export trade with Persia by means of bounties, and a railway to the Gulf might conceivably increase her sale of petroleum oil, cotton, and sugar at distant ports, by enabling her to save a portion of the heavy cost of canal dues by the Suez route. But as regards the import trade—and the goods entered at the Gulf ports are almost entirely British and Indian—so far from encouraging it on her own

frontier, she has displayed the most persevering ingenuity in strangling it altogether.

Her first efforts were directed, in 1883, against British goods in transit for Persia *via* the Caucasus. By abolishing the privileges formerly conceded to this traffic, and placing it on the same footing as the direct trade with Russian consumers, she secured a practical monopoly in the neighbouring markets of Persia for her own goods. Encouraged by this success, she next turned her attention to the British import trade from Khorassan into her Trans-Caspian possessions. In 1895-6 she substituted, for the previous uniform charge of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. extra on all such goods, a direct prohibition of all British and Indian merchandise, including cotton, with the two exceptions of indigo and tea, upon the black and green varieties of which she levied the formidable duties of 9*d.* and 1*s.* 4*d.* per lb. At the same time special facilities were given by the Black Sea route, with the single object of diverting the trade from Meshed, and thus incidentally occasioning a loss of, it is said, no less than 8,000*l.* to the Persian Customs.

We adduce these facts, not as evidence of Russia's hostility to ourselves—for we cannot expect her to allow considerations of policy to affect her fiscal arrangements—but as proofs that anxiety to share the benefits of Persia's import trade, at all events, is not one of her motives for desiring a railway and a port. Or are we to infer that she contemplates using them as a weapon for suffocating more effectually, by means of preferential rates and prohibitive tariffs, a British trade in the Gulf amounting to close upon two millions sterling annually? On any other hypothesis, as we have pointed out, they would merely afford facilities to ourselves which Russia has been at such special pains to withhold.

Consequently, if we wish to put as favourable a construction upon her policy as possible, we are compelled to assume that it is solely dictated by the desire to stimulate and protect her export trade. But the possession of a port and railway is not necessary for this purpose; nor could they possibly secure it unless the further acquisition by Russia be implied of all the territory through which the railway passes. Otherwise it would still be in the power of Persia at any moment to put in force an exorbitant or prohibitive tariff along the whole of the Khorassan frontier. We find ourselves, therefore, in the following dilemma. If Russia's object is political, it is hostile to Great Britain; if it is commercial, it can only be satisfied by the absorption or

partition of Persia. The first supposition, though not necessarily discreditable to Russia, clearly does not form a promising basis for any friendly understanding; the second involves a suspicion of treachery on her part to written engagements which are certainly as binding on her as would be any future contract to which we could obtain her assent. On March 29, 1888, M. de Giers read to Lord Salisbury a despatch from the Russian Foreign Minister in which the Czar's Government explicitly reaffirmed and renewed their engagement to respect and promote the integrity and independence of Persia, and Lord Cranborne stated in the debate on January 22 that 'he had official reason to believe 'that on both sides that assurance is maintained.'

We may now leave the topic of European alliances, and examine the more practical and pressing problem of our relations with the Persian and Turkish Governments themselves. Without clearly defined ideas on this subject it is idle to discuss the larger issues of policy. Our right to be consulted, and to exercise a determining influence in regard to any proposal for altering the *status quo*, depends not only on the magnitude of our share in the interests at stake, but on our power and the efforts we make to increase it. Uncertainty and vacillation in our dealings with Governments peculiarly weak and fickle means proportionate discouragement to British enterprise, distrust of our friendship and sincerity by the natives, and an increasing disposition on the part of their rulers to succumb to the pressure of more resolute and powerful neighbours. There is but one method of averting these evils, and that is to seize every opportunity, however apparently small, of promoting the expansion of our commerce and securing the removal of existing impediments by the exertion, if necessary, of diplomatic pressure at Constantinople and Teheran.

We are confronted at the threshold of such an inquiry with the familiar controversy as to the proper limits of State interference and support. Foreign Governments have always differed widely from our own in assuming a direct responsibility for trade interests, which we are content to relegate to private enterprise, and this is a factor which must be taken into account in estimating our own prospects and the results of international rivalry. It will be useful to examine, in the first place, the effects upon our trade of foreign methods which we cannot in any circumstances imitate, and, in the second, the value of such as we might partially or wholly adopt without any lapse from the

principles of orthodox finance. Let us take as an illustration of the first the figures of British and Russian trade with Persia in the north-east province of Khorassan for the year 1899-1900, when trade was not affected by any unusual cause :--

| | | | |
|----------------------|---------|--------------------|---------|
| | £ | | £ |
| Imports from India . | 142,099 | Exports to India . | 42,466 |
| „ „ Russia . | 178,708 | „ „ Russia | 147,075 |

It will be observed that in the case of imports Russian trade is slightly, in the case of exports enormously, in excess of our own. Notwithstanding, however, the heavy bounties and drawbacks granted to the sugar, cotton, and other goods imported by our rivals, the increased value of their trade over that of the preceding year was only 15,386*l.*, as compared with an increase on our own of 18,771*l.* Putting aside, therefore, the natural advantages which the proximity of the railway gives them for carrying oil from Baku and supplying the requirements of the large military cantonment at Askhabad, and the markets of Trans-Caspia and Russia itself, it does not seem that we have much cause for alarm at the results of their fiscal policy. It is true that if we take a broader survey the figures appear less satisfactory to ourselves; for whereas Russian imports have steadily risen in value from 86,929*l.* in 1895-6, the imports from India have declined from 199,165*l.* to their present figure. A closer examination reveals the significant and reassuring fact that, while this decline was directly due to the tariff charges which Russia adopted in 1896-7, and which we have already described, our trade has successfully faced and overcome those difficulties, and is already on the up grade. In that year Indian imports dropped in value at one bound to 89,547*l.*, and since then have nearly recovered their old level. Even the importation of green and black tea, upon which such prohibitive duties were fixed, has so steadily increased that its value now amounts to 61,806*l.*, or almost equivalent in value to three-fourths of our whole import trade in the black year to which we have referred.

We now turn to the case of Turkey, where our most formidable rivals are the Germans. It must be remembered, as Mr. Sarell observes, that ‘Germany is a new competitor in this field, and that her progress will naturally appear to ‘be rapid until she finally finds her level.’ Since the Emperor’s visit to the Sultan in 1890 she has spared no effort to push her enterprise in every direction, and the absence of any corresponding effort on our part renders more

remarkable the fact that 'in the main British goods hold 'their own.' Owing to the absence of reliable Customs returns at Bussorah, we cannot ascertain the comparative figures of British and German imports on the Shat el Arab, and must content ourselves with the general statistics of commerce between the two countries and Turkey:—

Exports to Turkey.

| | Germany. | United Kingdom |
|-------------|-----------|----------------|
| | £ | £ |
| 1895 . . . | 2,138,661 | 5,632,932 |
| 1896 . . . | 1,340,204 | 5,303,421 |
| 1897 . . . | 1,546,050 | 6,968,089 |
| 1898 . . . | 1,853,750 | 6,607,953 |
| 1899* . . . | 1,628,400 | 5,613,715 |

From these figures it appears that our trade has remained, on the whole, stationary, while that of Germany has sensibly declined; and that while hers has never equalled one-half of ours, it has quite recently fallen to less than one-fourth. Whatever, therefore, we may have to fear from German competition in the future, and whatever lessons we may have to learn from her present methods, they are not to be inferred from any actual experience in the past. We doubt whether anyone, who impartially examines the causes affecting British trade in Turkey, will discover much reason to blame the British Government for neglecting opportunities for action which it was possible or desirable for them to take. Such causes are attributable chiefly to the policy, wise or unwise, of our merchants and financiers, and will continue so long as that policy is adhered to. Foremost among these is the unwillingness to invest capital in Turkish undertakings, owing to the distrust inspired by the repudiation of the debt in 1876, which occasioned the loss of much British capital. A somewhat similar phenomenon presented itself recently in the case of the proposed British loan to Persia in 1898, when the demand in the City for securities which the Persian Government was willing but unable to concede was, no doubt, largely motivated by recollection of the disaster which attended the Tobacco Régie and Lottery Concessions in 1890. In this case we think that the British Government committed a grave mistake in not

* It is interesting to observe the distribution of the exports from the United Kingdom as given in the Board of Trade returns for 1900. Out of a total of 5,432,011*l.*, Asiatic Turkey took 2,980,633*l.*, European Turkey 2,362,220*l.*, Cyprus 59,055*l.*, and Crete 30,103*l.*

giving a Treasury guarantee for the money, for which the Persian Customs afforded an ample security, and one which the Russian Government accepted unhesitatingly, without insisting on the appointment of special receivers at the Custom-houses. It is another thing, however, to suggest that the national credit should be pledged to investments in Turkish railways, which are not likely to be remunerative, and are built with a different object in view. Whether British capitalists are justified in their suspicions is a matter for them to decide. According to Mr. Sarell—

‘Turkish credit, even from a financial point of view, has been good ever since the cession of the six revenues to the foreign bondholders in 1881, and all the Turkish engagements then undertaken have been fulfilled. Where money has been lost in Turkey, it has been either through reckless speculation in Turkish stock prior to 1876, or to the default of the importing houses in Constantinople, which accounts for a relatively small portion of the sum of British capital engulfed in this country.’

It is, however, not in financial operations on a large scale, but in the revision of our commercial methods, that those most intimately acquainted with the problem perceive an opportunity for increasing our assets in Turkey. We start, says Mr. Sarell, with an advantage over our competitors in the natural affinity, testified to by many travellers, which exists between Turks and Englishmen. This advantage is at present deliberately thrown away by the employment of native or foreign agents, by a want of flexibility in our credit arrangements, and a disinclination to study the requirements of customers. In their criticisms and recommendations under each of these three heads Mr. Sarell and Colonel Massy are at one. They point out that trade with Turkey has in the main been profitable, and that a market in which we already possess a stake of more than twelve millions is at least worthy of attention. Unlike ourselves, our Continental rivals are willing to accept small orders, or even to sell a limited quantity of goods as a speculation, in order to obtain a hold upon new markets. They send out invoices with bills of lading direct to the merchants, allowing eight days for payment; whereas we insist upon payment on shipment and delivery of bill of lading, and so entail upon the importer an extra charge by way of commission, and the loss while the goods are in transit of a month’s interest on money for which, if he invested it, he might obtain interest at 9 per cent. Finally, our unique practice of employing foreigners, who are often acting at the same

time for foreign firms, as commercial travellers and agents on the score of economy severely handicaps our trade, and most of the money lost in the country by British houses has been swallowed up by the middleman, and not by the Turkish consumer.

The remedy suggested is the establishment at Constantinople, by a syndicate of home merchants, of an agency under the management of an Englishman forbidden to trade on his own account. Such an agency, costing between 1,500*l.* and 2,000*l.* a year, would facilitate the granting of credit on good guarantees and place the exporter in direct relation with local merchants, besides undertaking the collection of bad debts, the issue of advertisements and prospectuses in vernacular rates and idioms—for each district has often its own language and rate of exchange—and the duty of reporting on local requirements and the solvency of particular merchants. At present these functions are relegated entirely to our consuls and the Chamber of Commerce at Constantinople. The former have numerous other duties to perform; and the constant and most reprehensible tendency of the Treasury at home to effect small economies, by inducing the Foreign Office to reduce the staff and withdraw its representatives from important centres, as in the recent instance at Konia, makes it impossible for British merchants to depend upon them as a permanent source of information. The Chamber of Commerce is an even less reliable body, for its powers and opportunities of usefulness are completely paralysed by the absence of any adequate financial support, as the following figures will show :—

| | Annual income. | | Government subvention. | Total trade with Turkey. Piastres. |
|------------------------------------|----------------|----|---------------------------|--|
| | £ | s. | £ | |
| French Chamber of Commerce . } | 800 | 0 | 280 | 670,758,215* |
| Italian Chamber of Commerce . } | 500 | 0 | 140 | 116,799,248 |
| British Chamber of Commerce . } | 144 | 18 | — | 1,488,089,772 |

Germany has no chamber of commerce, but Government assistance takes another and even more effective form—viz., the subsidising of a weekly trade journal in Constantinople,

* The figures are those for 1896–7, the last available for comparison. Reckoning the piastre at 2·16*d.*, the figures would approximately read as follows: Italy, 1,051,193*l.*; France, 6,036,840*l.*; Great Britain, 15,192,808*l.*

the employment of a special staff at the Consulate to collect and tabulate statistics, and the maintenance at the Embassy of a commercial *attaché*, who communicates directly to the chief manufacturing centres in Germany the information which he acquires in the course of personal visits to the interior of Turkey. Americans are showing a similar solicitude for their interests by promoting direct steamer communication with the Levant and Black Sea ports, and by establishing exhibition warehouses and advertising agencies, under the control of exporting syndicates, with a working capital of 25,000*l.*, and a banking department which allows thirty to sixty days' credit to purchasers.

In view of these facts, it may be worth while for the British Government to consider the possibility of offering some financial assistance to the British Chamber of Commerce, on the understanding that more substantial contributions are forthcoming from mercantile houses and shipowners. The latter, although apparently less directly interested, subscribe at present more than three times as much as the former, and the patriotism of both would certainly be stimulated if an example were set them by the authorities at home. Even the Treasury could surely afford to acquiesce in an expenditure of, say, from five to seven hundred pounds per annum, which, even if it were only granted for a short term of years, would materially assist to swell the volume of our trade.

It might be supposed that, if the justification and scope for intervention or assistance to trade by the British Government are small in the case of Turkey, they are still smaller in the case of Persia. Indian exporters have proved, as we have said, their capacity to compete unaided in the markets of Khorassan, despite the hostile tariff policy of Russia; and the statistics of our trade in the Gulf ports, where it enjoys a 'fair field,' present a very encouraging contrast to the conditions of stagnation, or even decline, which characterise our commercial relations with Turkey. For purposes of comparison we take the returns for the same period, adding also the figures relating to shipping.*

* The comparative figures of British shipping at Constantinople and the Persian Gulf are even more significant than those relating to trade, for while in the Gulf both the increase of our tonnage and its percentage of the total entered and cleared are satisfactorily maintained, at Constantinople our percentage of the carrying trade has dwindled from 75 per cent. in 1893 to 53 per cent. in 1900.

| Year | Imports | | Exports | | Shipping | |
|--------|-----------|-------------------------------|-----------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------|
| | Total | From United Kingdom and India | Total | To United Kingdom and India | Total tonnage entered and cleared | From India |
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| 1895 . | 1,954,483 | — | 1,409,173 | — | 1,002,984 | 886,273 |
| 1896 . | 1,721,002 | 1,259,563 | 1,185,731 | 624,575 | 937,099 | 771,938 |
| 1897 . | 2,230,770 | 1,711,990 | 1,213,385 | 596,589 | 769,532 | 680,365 |
| 1898 . | 2,091,224 | 1,534,574 | 1,273,770 | 630,762 | 765,888 | 666,533 |
| 1899 . | 2,276,157 | 1,655,550 | 1,342,549 | 582,020 | 1,122,551 | 923,453 |
| 1900 . | 2,873,485 | 1,822,930 | 2,087,714 | 908,858 | — | — |

It will be seen that the growth of our trade, under the head both of imports and of exports, has been fairly steady and continuous, and, but for exceptional circumstances, the totals in 1900 would have been considerably large. At Bushire our imports and exports rose from 840,363*l.* in 1899 to 1,294,127*l.* in 1900, and at Mohammerah and the Karun ports from 233,027*l.* to 332,729*l.* On the other hand, there was a substantial falling-off at Lingah, owing to a partial failure of the pearl fishery on the Arab coast; and at Bunder Abbas trade was brought to a standstill for some months by an unsuccessful attempt on the part of the merchants to boycott the Customs, which had recently been placed under Belgian control. Of the value of this control to the Persian Government and to ourselves, apart from the incidental advantage of preventing theft of goods and fraudulent evasions of duty at the ports, we gain a startling revelation by comparing the trade returns for recent years in the remote and, for us, least accessible province of Azerbaidjan.

| Year | Total imports | Imports from Great Britain. | Total exports | Exports to Great Britain |
|-----------|---------------|-----------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| 1897-8 . | 649,200 | 282,920 | 210,700 | 12,500 |
| 1898-9 . | 682,330 | 297,300 | 219,930 | 18,000 |
| 1899-1900 | 723,174 | — | 316,304 | — |
| 1900-1 . | 1,204,069 | — | 649,415 | — |

The figures of British imports and exports for the last two years are not specified in the Consular Reports. Assuming, however, that the relative proportions of 1898-9 were maintained in 1901, we may assign as our share of the imports 401,356*l.*, and of the exports 54,119*l.*—in other words, a gain in two years of no less than 140,175*l.* on a total of 315,300*l.*

In view of such conclusive testimony from the north-eastern and north-western, as well as from the southern, provinces, it is evident that so long, at all events, as Persia retains her independence we need not be greatly disturbed by the pessimistic and alarmist forecasts which are periodically hazarded about our trade. The maintenance of territorial integrity and the maintenance of the 'open door' are, we believe, synonymous and interdependent policies; and a transference of sovereignty would mean a curtailment of the facilities for trade and travel which we now enjoy in Persia, precisely analogous to that which has accompanied the occupation of Madagascar by the French and of Manchuria by the Russians. But the extension of foreign, even of non-British, influence at Teheran may be, as experience has proved in the case of the Belgians, actually beneficial to ourselves as well as to the Persian Government. It will only be harmful in so far as it is directed against the development of the country and the opening and extension of its great trade arteries.

Against such influences we are bound to guard by every legitimate means in our power. We cannot, indeed, dictate to the Shah the terms upon which he may accept foreign loans; but we can refuse our assent to any mortgage which diminishes the value and security of our own interests in the property. For the next eight years he has surrendered his right to develop his own estates as he pleases, but the prospective injury which is thus inflicted on ourselves is *pro tanto* shared by all foreign clients, including the Russian creditors. Nor have we anybody to blame but ourselves for that result. We have shown an unmerited distrust of Persia ourselves, and, although our popularity with the natives was worth more to us than any trade monopoly, we took no steps to discourage concessions, in 1890, which we ought to have known would be distasteful to religious sentiment in Persia; and having entailed upon her, as compensation for the withdrawal of those concessions, a debt of half a million, at 6 per cent. interest, the instalments of which were punctually paid, we refused in 1898 to afford her the facilities for paying off her liabilities, which Russia at once hastened to volunteer. Before long even this temporary relief will have been exhausted; Persia will be obliged to apply for a new loan, and Russia will then be able to insist upon guarantees of a more onerous character, as the direct and inevitable result of the exclusion, in deference to our representations, of the Customs of Fars and the Persian

Gulf from the securities hypothecated to the service of the debt.

There is a great danger that the population may come to believe that British selfishness is causing the loss of their national independence; and it is a danger akin to one which is already staring us in the face in China, where the terrific burden imposed by the European indemnities will fall in great measure on the central and southern provinces, which had no part in the anti-foreign rising. We should keep this fact in mind whenever the question arises, as it probably will, of our consenting to a mortgage of the revenues of Southern Persia, or to a revision of the general Customs tariff. Our complaisance might fairly be made conditional on the grant of further facilities to European trade in general, without infringing Russia's monopoly of credit transactions, or her right to veto the construction of railways.

The most pressing requirements of our traders in Persia at the present moment may be summed up under two heads—the removal of natural and artificial obstacles to traffic and transport, and the establishment of competent courts of jurisdiction to settle debts and disputes without the irritating delay and expense at present involved in their constant reference to Teheran. Of the artificial impediments we need not say much. The extraordinary attempt made by the Russian Cossack officers in 1897, as related by Colonel Yate, to employ the quarantine regulations as a weapon for strangling the trade, by the Beluchistan route, between Persia and India will, we hope, not be repeated; for it would force to the front the question of the impartial employment in such posts of Europeans belonging to other nationalities. The only other grievance of which complaint has been made in the past, the irregular imposition of duties at the inland towns over and above the recognised 5 per cent. at the port of entry, has already been removed by the new Belgian administration. Natives have been put on the same footing as foreigners, a small road tax is the only extra impost levied, and all internal Customs and octrois have been abolished. The natural hindrances to traffic, however, remain unabated. It matters not, to quote Mr. Hogarth, that Yeza and Kerman may be starving, while surplus grain is rotting at Kermanshah. No attempt is made to open up new roads between important trade centres; the existing ones are left in hopeless disrepair; merchandise is exposed to the expense, uncertainty, and delay arising from the heavy and fluctuating

cost of transport, and the lawlessness of predatory tribes. Especially is this the case on the Bunder Abbas-Yezd-Kerman-Meshed road, by which India carries on an import and export trade with Persia to the amount of 180,445*l.* per annum. Since the close of the Sefavi dynasty, when the Bunder Abbas-Isfahan caravan route was abandoned for the new road from Bushire and Shiraz, by far the larger proportion of the Indian import trade which enters at Bunder Abbas passes to Meshed through Kerman.* The remaining 38,356*l.* which India sends to North-Western Persia follows the new road through Beluchistan, which is capable of almost indefinite developement, though it is doubtful whether it can ever compete on terms of equality with the more westerly route.† True, it has the advantage of securing through transport, and of avoiding the expenses of shipment at Karachi and change of hands in transit, and it passes for more than half the total distance through British territory. But the distance is considerably longer—1,092 miles, or fifty-four marches, as against 966 miles, or forty-six marches, from Bunder Abbas to Meshed—and the extra cost of railway carriage from Karachi to Quetta will always incline the balance in favour of the sea route. The chief value to ourselves of the Nushki route, or of any railway which may be built between Quetta and the Perso-Baluch border, would consist, partly in the opportunity which it would afford for military operations, and partly in its proximity to the markets, not of Khorassan, but of Sistan. At Kuh Malek Siah we should be already in touch with those markets from which Russia at her nearest point, Zulfikar, is separated by a distance of 300 miles; and although at present the resources of the country are small, their developement would be of very material importance to India. The supply of good and cheap remounts for native cavalry is a case in point. The fiscal policy of the late Amir and the rapacity

*142,099*l.* out of 204,305*l.* in 1900. The following is the relative order of importance, as regards import trade with the interior, in which the three southern ports stand to India: Bushire, 277,542*l.*; Bunder Abbas, 204,305*l.*; Mohammedrah, 132,494*l.*

† The following are the figures of the trade (imports and exports) by the Nushki route for the last four years:—

| | | Lakhs. | Rupees. |
|------------|---|--------|---------|
| April 1897 | . | 5 | 89,929 |
| " 1898 | . | 7 | 28,082 |
| " 1899 | . | 12 | 35,412 |
| " 1900 | . | 15 | 34,452 |

of Afghan chiefs have practically killed the trade in Persian horses between Meshed and Chaman, and Turkey has lately closed the great breeding-ground of the Tigris plains by prohibitive duties on the export of Arabs.* In these circumstances it is interesting to read Colonel Yate's testimony to the abatement of horse-sickness and fly-pest, and the consequent increase of breeding in Sistan. Furthermore, the fertility of the soil and its capacities under a more scientific system of drainage and irrigation in the basin of the Helmund are unquestionable; and with the improvement in climatic conditions which is already observable, there is no reason why Sistan should not provide the famine-stricken population of India with a granary as copious and as easily accessible as that which Russia already finds in the neighbouring province of Khorassan.

The extent to which we avail ourselves of these opportunities depends solely upon ourselves, since we do not require the permission of any other Power. But for the protection and improvement of the Bunder Abbas-Kerman and the Kuh Malek Siah-Birjand roads to Meshed we rely entirely on the good will or compliance of the Shah. Hitherto we have made no demands upon him at all comparable with those exacted by Russia. Two illustrations will suffice to mark the contrast between our respective policies. Whereas we pay a substantial subsidy on account of the telegraph lines, Russia makes no contribution whatever towards the upkeep of the Sarakhs-Meshed wire, which is of great service to her and entails heavy expense upon the Persian Government. Again, while Russia has compelled her neighbour to spend 30,000*l.* on the construction and maintenance of a road, which can be of service to none but herself, from Meshed *via* Kuchan in connection with her own road from the frontier to Askhabad, we have allowed traffic to be constantly impeded or stopped on the southern roads, which serve as avenues for Russian, quite as much as for British, trade to the markets of Yezd, Birjand, and Kerman. It is earnestly to be hoped that the Persian Government, if unable or unwilling itself to undertake the responsibility of improving and adequately policing these roads, will be pressed to allow us a free hand in making

* Perhaps, as Mr. Hogarth ingeniously suggests, it is feared that the attempt now being made to restrict the migratory movements of the Kurdish nomads may diminish the supply of horses for military purposes, just as the conversion of the Bedawin into fellahin will diminish the supply of camels for transport.

arrangements, if we can, with the tribes of the South-East similar to those which have been made by Messrs. Lynch with the Bakhtiari tribes between Ahwaz and Isfahan. At the same time there is urgent need for the appointment of a large number of British agents in this quarter. Before 1889 Russia displayed no activity in South-Eastern Persia, but almost immediately after the establishment of her first Consul-General at Meshed in that year, she sent her emissaries to Birjand, Turbat i Haidari, and Kain, and even to Nasratabad, the capital of Sistan, subsidising native officials, and bidding for the political affections of a people whose Sunnite creed places them out of sympathy with their present rulers.

As a check upon this propaganda, and upon more overt acts of hostility to our trade-rights, it would be well if we had native agents and newswriters scattered throughout South-Eastern Persia, Sistan, and Khorassan, as well as duly accredited representatives permanently stationed at such centres as Yezd, Bunder Abbas, and Kerman. It is surely an example of parsimony, most discreditable to a rich nation like ours, that for eight years we should have consented to accept the services of a consul in Sistan without any salary at all!

When we contrast this attitude of neutrality, which can hardly be described as even 'benevolent,' with the hearty co-operation of political and individual effort exhibited in the cases of Germany and Russia, the marvel is that our own traders should be so little disheartened and display as much public spirit as they do. While the Germans in Anatolia, aided by diplomatic support, use their railway concessions to push, by means of a special staff, the import trade in agricultural goods and machinery, and to establish commercial agents in every district; while the Russians found banks in Azerbaijan with the special object of stimulating their export trade and obtaining mining and other rights, and in Ghilan construct a high-road to the capital, towards the cost of which the State subscribes more than twice as much as the merchants,* the British Government is content to be officially represented by unpaid volunteers, and, without any corresponding sacrifice, to profit by a liberality on the part of individual traders which is justified by political quite as much as by commercial considerations.

The enterprising firm of Messrs. Lynch, who conduct the steamer service of the Tigris and Karun in the face of con-

* 240,000l., as against 100,000l.

tinuous and vexatious opposition, and without any assistance from the Government beyond a trifling postal subsidy, have during the last few years laboured, with some success and at considerable expense, to open out, by arrangements with the Bakhtiari tribes, a new land route of 266 miles between Isfahan and the upper waters of the Karun at Ahwaz. This already enables goods to be carried in fifteen days to Mohammerah, a saving of ten days on the old route of 458 miles across the rocky 'kotal's' which lie between Shiraz and Bushire. From Ahwaz they can be taken by river to Shellalieh, near Shuster, and thence conveyed in six days by road to Khoremmabad, the Government headquarters of Luristan. Another three days would bring them to Burujird, within easy distance of Sultanabad, where they would strike the existing road, made by the Imperial Bank, to Kum and Teheran.

This would give us an easier and shorter alternative to the present routes, which run through Turkish territory *via* Erzerum or Van in the north, and between Bagdad and Kermanshah in the south. Traffic passed along the Dizful-Khoremmabad section for a few months in 1900, but was subsequently suspended owing to tribal raids; and unless a bargain can be made with the Lur chiefs, like that which has worked so well in the case of the Bakhtiaris, a most promising opening for trade will be lost. The cost of mule transport in the Dizful district is cheaper by one-third than in the eastern provinces, and both imports and exports are susceptible of great expansion. Already there is a marked increase in the cultivation of gum tragacanth and tobacco in the central and north-western districts, and the improved standard of comfort among the population of the Urmi and Salmas plains, including over 100,000 Nestorian and Armenian Christians, must enlarge the demand for Manchester and Sheffield wares, and for the sugar, which is now supplied almost exclusively by France, but may in future claim a larger degree of attention from the Indian planters.

We believe that if these results are to be secured the British Government must take a more active part than they have hitherto done. In the days when Great Britain and Turkey were on more cordial terms than they are now, it was our policy to rely on the Sultan's good offices for the protection of our trade with Persia. At our suggestion he constructed the road between Trebizond, Erzerum, and Bayazid, and it was partly in order to protect the frontier traffic that we interposed at San Stefano to compel the

restitution of the latter fortress by Russia. The result has not justified our expectations. The trade with Tabriz, valuable as it is, amounting to 700,000*l.* per annum, is nevertheless a diminishing one; the Van-Khoi route, which affords the readiest access to the Urmi plain from the central highlands of Armenia, is permanently blocked by the depredations of the Persian Shikkak Kurds; and the Black Sea route is liable to sudden and complete interruption in the event of hostilities. If, therefore, we are to maintain or strengthen our hold on Northern Persia, it must be by providing ourselves with a secure line of communication from the south; by bringing the hardy fighting tribes into relation not only with private firms, but with the British Government itself, and convincing them that in keeping faith with us they have the surest guarantee against any injustice which the Persian Government may be induced by foreign suggestion or pressure to attempt. The game which we have to play—the defensive policy of maintaining the *status quo*—is necessarily a difficult one, because the methods and direction of the attack are constantly varying. We can only hope to win it by opposing to the craven spirit and corruption of her statesmen the resolute pride and patriotism of Persia's natural defenders. Time will, no doubt, be required for such a task, infinite patience and toleration of native prejudice, loyal co-operation with every foreign agency which labours in the same cause as we. But the awakening of Persia, like the awakening of Japan, may be more sudden than we think. 'History,' says Lord Curzon, 'suggests that the Persians will insist upon surviving themselves: present indications that they will gradually absorb the accomplishments of others.' In any case our duty is plain. Self-reliance and self-respect, not the apathy and dependence of serfs; progress to a higher, not acquiescence in a degraded, ideal, are the results which we, of all other nations, are bound by our historic traditions to strive for and expect from that most wonderful event of the age in which we live—the blowing of the winds of Christendom over the dry bones of the East.

- ART. VII.—1. *Letters of John Richard Green.* Edited by LESLIE STEPHEN. London: Macmillan & Co. 1901.
2. *A Short History of the English People.* London: Macmillan & Co. 1874.
3. *History of the English People.* 4 vols. London: Macmillan & Co. 1877–80.
4. *The Making of England.* London: Macmillan & Co. 1882.
5. *The Conquest of England.* London: Macmillan & Co. 1883.
6. *Stray Studies from England and Italy.* London: Macmillan & Co. 1876.
7. *Studies in Oxford History.* By the Rev. JOHN RD. GREEN, M.A., and the Rev. GEO. ROBERSON, M.A. Oxford: 1901.

THE publication of John Richard Green's letters after nearly twenty years does not come too late to awaken the recollection of his remarkable personality. The writer of the 'Short History of the English People' had a considerable influence in directing and educating the thought of the English people during the last quarter of the nineteenth century; and though modern memories are short, and even the work of history is often only less ephemeral than the monthly or weekly article on the subject, the 'Short History' sells by thousands yearly, and is not likely to be superseded soon. And in Green's case, when we take into account the facts of the writer's struggle in the race with the short time allotted to him for giving his knowledge to the world, the book has been the man, as the saying goes, and the man the book, in a special manner, the one helping us to know the other. Now, the portrait drawn by Mr. Stephen in the inter-chapters published with the letters, presents him vividly before our minds. The letters are accompanied by an interesting comment on the literary and religious history of the day; and it is hardly necessary to add that Mr. Stephen has done both portrait and comment as well as it was possible to do them.

Johnny Green—the familiar name is an indication of the man; we could not 'frame to pronounce' 'Ned Freeman' or 'Will Stubbs'—is one of those letter-writers who wrote without any thought of personal dignity or historical pose. He wrote as a friend to friends, a comrade to comrades. The letters are written from day to day, with no thought of a possible public, no reserve, no modelling of style, no self-consciousness; they contain jokes, puns, trivialities,

even bits of childishness and immature taste. But as they have been given us by Mr. Stephen they are a truthful picture of the whole man; and we believe no one will read them without feeling admiration for the genius and affection for the character of the writer. Green, as we see him here, was a warm and constant friend, a lover of men and women, a philanthropist and socialist, a devout Christian, besides being a scholar and a man of genius. His letters may not be so rich and individual as Edward FitzGerald's, nor so witty and delicious as Charles Lamb's, nor so universal as Byron's; as letters, they take a second rank, but as a personal portraiture they satisfy all ideals. His talk must have been like these letters; vivid (Tennyson's epithet), tender, audacious, paradoxical, combative, playing with high subjects without bringing them down to a lower level, and as versatile as serious: just what we should expect from a man who was as alive with humour as he was convinced of the grave reality of life. Green was not a genius of the first order: but in all that he said and wrote is the *quality* of genius, which differs, as he knew, from the *quality* of talent or of ability.* Peel was a man of ability, Pitt a man of talent, Gladstone and Disraeli men of genius: what differences these words denote! The quality of genius may be discerned in men so different from each other in nature and scale as Scott, Leigh Hunt, Stevenson, and Thackeray; there is something which separates them from other men; and though this quality tempers Green's clay in a different proportion from that of Byron, it marks him off no less from other men, even from men whom he revered as his superiors, such as Stubbs and Freeman. Froude, whom he detested, and Kingsley, whom he undervalued, had it too.

It was a misfortune to Green that, being the son of a robe-maker at Oxford and connected with tradespeople in the town, he was brought up, first at Magdalen School, and then at a college which suited him so ill as Jesus. It made him feel his plebeian origin, and set up in him an antagonism to his surroundings. He would have been better off at Balliol, as regards his University life, or better still at Cambridge, where he would have had a clear start, and would not have been teased with self-consciousness, the bane of sensitive

* 'You defined "genius" when here as a peculiar aptitude for a certain branch of study. Pardon me, that is talent. Genius is a much higher thing: the power of bending circumstances to our will. . . . Suppose we go in then for genius, not talent?' (P. 113.)

natures. He loved Oxford as a town, not as a University. He rebelled against University methods, and would not read for honours; he felt himself unappreciated and despised; and though he rose above such feelings, they stunted him and inclined him to misanthropy. He wrote to Dean Stanley in 1863:—

‘I came up to Oxford a hard reader and a passionate High Churchman. Two years of residence left me idle and irreligious. Partly from ill-health, partly from disgust at my college, I had cut myself off from society within or without it. I rebelled doggedly against the system around me. I would not work, because work was the Oxford virtue. I tore myself from history, which I loved, and plunged into the trifles of archæology, because they had no place in the University course.’ (P. 17.)

The ‘Sermon on Work’ which he found in Stanley’s lectures converted him—*mutatus Polemo*. ‘I took up my old ‘boy-dreams—history—I think I have been a steady worker ‘ever since.’

He did not, however, forgive his college, in which he found but one like-minded friend, Boyd Dawkins, the sharer of his most intimate thoughts: he found friendship and appreciation outside its walls, and was saved from bitterness by Freeman, Boyd Dawkins, Bryce, and Stubbs, who revealed to him his large capacity for friendship. When his choice of a profession brought him into contact with the realities of squalid life, when he had to do with drink, penury, prostitution, and crime, he became a lover of his kind and learnt the meaning of the Christian life. He felt from his earliest years that history was his final vocation, but turned from books to life; and the heroism which was a characteristic element in his nature was developed by the dull drudgery of everyday duty in a London parish, which taught him the *nil alienum* of humanity.

Here, too, the love of family life and the society of friends, which his domestic circumstances at Oxford had not done enough to develope, found its opportunity in the welcome given him by the family of Mr. Ward, his vicar, and the Von Glehns, at Sydenham. How much his life was cheered and encouraged and his intellectual sympathies answered by the friendship of Mr. and Mrs. Ward, their son Humphrey and his wife, Mrs. Creighton and her sister, Miss von Glehn, and the friends he met at their houses, the correspondence gives abundant and happy evidence. Henceforward he was ‘rich in friends,’ as those only can be who know the value of such riches. Busy as his life always was, parish duty and historical study did not make him forgetful

of the large public questions of the day. Among these, as we have seen, social problems occupied much of his thoughts; but he also took an active interest, though no very active part, in politics generally. He was an insatiable reader of newspapers. He uttered his first warning note against war in some rather impatient verses written against the Volunteer movement. He was 'German to the core' in the war of 1870, but thought the claim to Alsace 'revolting'; on which subject he wrote to Freeman (with astonishing freedom), 'The truth is, you care a good deal for freedom in the past, but in the present you hate France more than you love liberty.' Bismarck and himself, he said, were the only pro-Germans who wished to leave Alsace alone.

In 1868 he writes eagerly about the General Election of that year. In 1876 he joined the 'Eastern Question Association,' founded 'to oppose the warlike tendencies of the Conservative Ministry.' 'He was the first Home Ruler I ever saw,' says Mr. Bryce; sympathising warmly with the sentiment of Irish nationality. 'A nation is something real, which can be neither made nor destroyed.'

It is an insoluble question whether the world loses or gains more by the diversion of such writers as Stubbs, Lightfoot, and Creighton from the path of history into the absorbing duties of a bishopric. Gardiner would not be even a professor, nor Erasmus a cardinal; and Gibbon and Macaulay preferred learned leisure—that is to say, ceaseless labour—to the prizes of a political life. One would be tempted to think Green, too, thrown away on the details of parochial life; but there is no reason to believe that Green himself thought so. He plunged into parish life with the eagerness which distinguished everything he did, 'doing it with his might.' He never was tempted to think himself too good for his work. The schools and the house-to-house visiting interested him, it may be, more than the Sunday work, but all the parish organisation was valuable in his eyes. He looked upon a parish as a piece of English life with a unity and life of its own, and, though he complained that the parson could never get to the real life of the poor—'their life is not his life, nor their ways his ways' (p. 68)—he gave them the best of his time and care, and nearly all the 300*l.* a year which his living was worth. Above all, he was always happy with the children.

'They laugh with me, romp with me, steal my watch, run away with my sixpences, absorb my time, tyrannise over all my old bachelor habits, bid me "put down my book," and it is put down;

"talk," and I abandon my loved silences; "play," and I play. . . . And out of all this comes a happy, most happy, Christmas.' (P. 116.)

Mr. Stephen quotes the following from a review of Edward Denison's letters : *—

'A vicar's Monday morning is never the pleasantest of awakenings, but the Monday morning of an East end vicar brings worries that far eclipse the mere headache and dyspepsia of his rural brother. It is the "parish morning." All the complicated machinery of a great ecclesiastical, charitable, and educational organisation has got to be wound up afresh, and set going for another week. The superintendent of the Women's Mission is waiting with a bundle of accounts, complicated as only ladies' accounts can be. The churchwarden has come with a face full of gloom to consult on the falling-off of the offertory. . . . The organist drops in to report something wrong with the pedals. . . . The nurse brings her sick-list and her little bill for the sick-kitchen. . . . There is the interest on the penny bank to be calculated, a squabble in the choir to be adjusted, a district visitor to be replaced, reports to be drawn up for the Bishop's Fund and a great charitable society, the curates' sick-list to be inspected, and a preacher to be found for the next church festival.' (P. 57.)

This is one side of the picture; but when we read that 'his preaching and his earnest and reverent reading of the 'Church Service left a permanent impression upon many 'hearers' (p. 58), and that he filled the empty church of St. Philip's, Stepney, with a congregation of eight hundred; that he anticipated in his own sphere of action the principles soon afterwards accepted by the Charity Organisation Society (p. 56), and worked hand-in-hand with Edward Denison in carrying them out; that he set up a literary society in his parish, and gave much pains to annotating and rewriting the essays of working men; that he found 'the most polished gentleman here in a pork-butcher's shop, 'and the most learned scholar' in the parish clerk; that he was beloved by children and young people—it is impossible to wish that his life had been spent between the Bodleian and his college rooms. He would have written more history, but his moral nature might have been starved. He himself says :—

'Something, which I know I must resist like grim death, is constantly bidding me isolate myself among my books, and leave the world to drift as it will.' (P. 153.)

'His labours in the East-end,' says the Editor, 'as he often himself remarked, had an important bearing upon his literary work. His sympathies with human beings were strengthened;

* See 'A Brother of the Poor' in 'Stray Studies,' p. 11.

and the history might have been written in a very different tone had the writer passed his days in academical seclusion. His interest in the welfare of the masses, and his conviction that due importance should be given to their social condition, determined a very important peculiarity of the work.' (P. 59.)

No part of Green's life is more admirable than his clerical work in London. Besides the ordinary duty of a London clergyman, which gave him scant time for work at the British Museum, work not only congenial and desirable, but necessary for the 'Saturday Review' articles by which he made his living, he set going or supported various schemes for clerical union, a Clerical Liberal Association, an organ of Liberal religious opinions, and a Curates' Clerical Club ('C.C.C.'), at the meetings of which Maurice, Stanley, and other leaders 'occasionally looked in' (p. 70). But his character came out most finely in an outbreak of cholera at Stepney in 1866. 'Within an hour of the first seizure in 'his parish, Green himself,' says Mr. Gell, 'met the dying 'patients in the London Hospital, and thenceforward, while 'the plague lasted, Green, like other clergy in the parishes 'attacked, worked day and night amidst the panic-stricken 'people, as officer of health, inspector of nuisances, ambulance superintendent' (p. 55), chafing the limbs of the dying with his own hands, helping to carry the sick into hospital and remove the dead from infected houses; and by cheerfulness and persuasion encouraging the living to live, never sparing himself for all his weak health, and 'showing 'no alarm except for his friends.'

Such was his clerical career. Without it his life might have been longer, and his contribution to English history would have been more bulky, perhaps not more valuable. We return to make a few remarks on the other side of his clerical career—his position as a Liberal clergyman.

If Green had been born a few years earlier, he would probably have remained contentedly in the ministry of the Church of England; if he had been born a few years later, he would not have taken Orders. The moment on which he lighted was the parting of the ways. He was ordained deacon in 1860, and worked as a clergyman till 1869, when growing doubts of his fitness to officiate in a dogmatic Church caused him to accept the post of Librarian at Lambeth, offered to him by his friend Archbishop Tait. If we look back five years before the earlier of these dates, we find that in 1855 Lewes's 'Life of Goethe,' Robertson's 'Sermons,' and Stanley's 'Sinai and Palestine' were pub-

lished, in 1857 appeared Buckle's 'History of Civilization,' in 1859 Darwin's 'Origin of Species,' in 1860 'Essays and Reviews,' in 1862 Colenso's 'Pentateuch' and 'Joshua' and Spencer's 'First Principles,' in 1863 Huxley's 'Man's Place in Nature,' Renan's 'Vie de Jésus,' and Stanley's 'Jewish Church,' in 1864 Newman's 'Apologia' and Strauss's 'New Life of Jesus,' in 1865 Lecky's 'History of Rationalism,' in 1869 Arnold's 'Culture and Anarchy.' The air was full of polemical and provocative literature. No intelligent young man could go through Oxford or Cambridge without being affected by the spirit of inquiry, unless he joined one of the two obscurantist camps. No candidate for Orders could escape the new methods of interpretation, nor could any clergyman who read the papers and the current books and magazines fail to be aware that a change was coming over the Church, even if he thought that it would pass away. Uncertainty about the future, a generous sympathy with the clergy who were molested for unorthodox utterances, an honourable, if too scrupulous, respect for the meaning of pledges and subscriptions, kept many of the keenest minds out of the ministry. Young Oxford was more defiant than young Cambridge; but a flood of unbelief burst on both Universities, and hardly now are the tops of the mountains seen. It was a bad time for taking Orders, and a difficult time for those who had taken Orders and now found themselves in sympathy with the Liberal movement in theology.

According to his own account (p. 21), he took Orders in 'a fit of religious enthusiasm.' 'The fit,' says Mr. Stephen, 'seems to have been very genuine and lasting.'

There were, however, difficulties to be met at the outset. He was no longer a High Churchman. He had steeped himself in geology and Darwinism. 'Smash Darwin! Smash the Pyramids!' he exclaimed, on the occasion of the famous encounter between Huxley and Wilberforce, in which the Bishop got the worse of the argument, but the bad manners were about equally divided between the combatants. Just before his ordination he reads 'Goethe and Schiller, instead of Paley and Pearson—I know from which one learns the *truest* theology.' Indeed, he refused to read the 'Evidences' and Pearson 'On the Creed,' and his substitution of 'Horæ Paulinæ' for the former, at Stanley's suggestion, was not accepted by Tait. 'Oh, Stanley, Stanley!' cried the Bishop, and sent Green back (p. 23).

It must have been clear to himself as well as to others

that he was not going to be an orthodox clergyman. He was ostensibly an Evangelical—that is to say, he was the curate of an Evangelical vicar; but in fact he belonged neither to High Church nor Low Church, and felt isolated.

‘Highs and Lows have their gatherings, their conferences; know one another, comfort one another, strengthen one another. But the Liberal must eat the bread of solitude! He has no gathering, no Margaret Street, no Exeter Hall. There may be, must be, other heretics in the world, but he does not know them, and he has no means of knowing them.’ (P. 70.)

He writes to Boyd Dawkins, five months after taking Deacon’s Orders:—

‘Pardon my little sermon, dear Dax, it is preached rather to myself than to you. It is really preached at my anxieties about the future of my opinions—church-theories and the like. Where am I drifting to? Will not the stone fall some day on me? These are the questions which will rise up. To work fearlessly, to follow earnestly after Truth, to rest with a childlike confidence in God’s guidance, to leave one’s lot willingly and heartily to Him—this is my sermon to myself. . . . While we remain mere ministers of the Church of England we must be afraid of our neighbour’s ill-will, of accusations of atheism, of “ignorant bishops”; but once become a minister of the Church Eternal, and the cry of controversy falls unheeded on ears that are deaf to all but the Heavenly harpings around the Throne. Of course this is what people are ready to sneer at—mysticism. But in the union of Mysticism with freedom of thought and inquiry will, I am persuaded, be found the faith of the future.’ (Pp. 77–80)

And, again, a year later (November 4, 1862):—

‘I see storms ahead. The rumours of Maurice’s rejection of clerical preferment have set me thinking—thinking. There are clearly two errors to be avoided. (1) Remaining in a ministry without holding the prescribed doctrines of that ministry. (2) The opposite one of exaggerating one’s own variance of opinion from the prescribed formularies. And there are two great principles to be kept in mind. (1) To remain in the ministry of the Church of England so long as by doing so one is helping to broaden its sphere of thought. (2) To quit it the moment continuance within it tends to narrow one’s own.’

And a year later still:—

‘I see no limit to this progress in “religion.” It is in the very idea of progress that my faith, my deep and intense faith, in Christianity, rests. Like you I see other religions . . . doing their part in the education of the human race. And I see the race advancing beyond the faiths that instructed it, so that at each great advance of human thought a religion falls dead and vanishes away. And I judge that this must ever be a condition of human progress, except some religion appear

which can move forward with the progress of man. There comes a religion which does this. Take your Gibbon and test what I say. The fresh sons of the Germanic forests break in upon effete Rome—and all perishes of Rome save this. Christianity assumes new forms and a new life, and moulds this chaos into the world of the Middle Ages. . . . And then the Middle Ages vanish away, and the World of our day emerges from the Reformation, and Christianity takes new forms and infuses a new life into the new phase of humanity. . . . And now human thought makes each hour advances such as it has never made before; and Christianity, spiritualised and purified by the wider demands made upon it, is ready to meet and satisfy them all. . . . The Sermon on the Mount is a succession of "impossible precepts." They are all summed up in a precept still more impossible: "Be ye perfect, even as your Father in Heaven is perfect." And so it must ever keep ahead of man. If there be any truth in our veriest instincts God must ever be beyond us, beyond our power, our knowledge, our virtue.' (P. 118.)

He writes to Freeman in 1866:—

' . . . My view of the Creeds is this. I am definitely asserting my belief, i.e. trust, faith in a Living Being. I go on to repeat certain historic statements about him which may (or may not) be affected by critical research, which are subjects of intellectual credence and not of religious faith. I repeat them—as I repeat phrases in the prayers—as I read publicly legends from the Bible—as I repeat damnable psalms; that is, I take them as parts of old formularies whose literal accuracy may pass away, or whose tone may now jar against the Christian consciousness, but which have still an ideal truth, embody a great doctrine, continue the train of Christian tradition. Thought will be always altering—we cannot be always altering our formularies—and so (if we are to retain formularies at all) there will always be a break and dissonance between the two. But men take things in the rough. (P. 164.)

After the judgement in the case of 'Essays and Reviews' in 1864, he writes:—

'The sum of all the decisions is . . . this—that there remains now in the Church of England's formularies nothing to restrain freedom of thought. Of course different people will view this discovery in very different ways; very few probably but will feel dismay at an experiment which no Church has tried before, that of teaching without any authoritative standard of doctrine—or rather with standards, but such as do not fix or determine the questions of the present or of the future.

'If I do not share these fears, if I exult at the destiny which God has given to the Church which I love—it is simply because I believe in the Inspiration of the Church, in its guidance by the Spirit of God.'

He goes on to say that he looks for this guidance

'not surely in the decision of Churches, for they vary,' . . . but in 'the general voice of the Church, the public opinion of Christendom.'

. . . 'That these "voices of the Church" do not point in a doctrinal direction, but in directions moral, social, political, intellectual, is a fact well worth noting. . . . The history of the Church is the record of its education by the Spirit of God.'

His thought, put shortly, is this: the clergy are not the Church; clerical dogmatism is as obsolete as clerical domination; the clergy must follow Christian public opinion, not try to force it, and not be afraid of science, or history, or criticism. A new Reformation was beginning, and the Church of England should be on the side of the reforming agencies. This was the church of his dreams: who can say whether it is nearer in view now than forty years ago? At any rate, the Church of England has not yet set her face against the new Reformation.

We have no detailed record of the doubts and difficulties which led to Green's giving up his parish. His position was that of complete agreement with the 'extreme left wing,' the advanced neologians, and at the same time of sympathy with the Established Church, the Church of English history. He had no taste for polemics, theological or historical, and never engaged in controversy, whether from love of peace or conviction of its uselessness, certainly not from lack of pugnacity or courage. He did not wish to give up parish work, though it became clearer every year that his health was breaking under the strain, and his conscience did not call upon him to 'come out.'

'I have a great wish' (he writes to Edward Denison in January, 1869) 'not to part cable altogether; the hold the Church has over me, however slight, is a really healthy hold to a mind like mine. Moreover, I have still a great faith in the capacity of "*Ecclesia Anglicana*" to meet the *national* requirements of England in a way that no sectional action can do.'

This letter, written within three months of giving up his parish, shows that he still thought his position tenable; but it is probable that desire for leisure in which he could make use of his stores of historical learning may have combined with failing health to make the change welcome. He was never a denier or a detractor, and the national Church and the Christian religion were dear to him to the end of his life.

At the same time (we quote Mr. Stephen, p. 71),

'he was keenly alive to the danger of being tempted by his position into insincerity. His genuine affection for the Church, as well as his main material interests, might betray him in that direction. He resolved that if he should be at any time unable to use the words of the Litany—"Christ, have mercy upon us"—with perfect sincerity, he

would abandon the clerical character. When the time came he acted upon his resolution.'

Green's retirement from clerical life to the Library at Lambeth took place without any violent rendings or uprootings, but rather as a natural change, not wished for by him, but also not regretted.

He writes to Professor Boyd Dawkins, April 24, 1869 :—

'My dear Dax, . . . I hardly know myself as yet whether I am on my head or my heels. It is so odd to be without a parish, without a parsonage, without a hundred bothers, interruptions, quarrels, questions to decide, engagements to recollect, lectures to compose, visits to make, sermons to plan, &c., &c. Then, too, the quiet of the Lambeth Library is like still waters after the noise of the East. I enjoy even the cleaner streets, and above all my morning's trot through the parks. It is such a change, too, to get a chat when one likes, to be able to get a peep at good pictures, and to have one's mind free for the things one cares about.'

For the remainder of his short life Green was a historian and nothing else; fighting with indomitable courage and persistency against pain and weakness, and never ceasing to work till within a few weeks of his death, when he could no longer hold a pen and could hardly dictate.

His literary ambition always took a wide range. Before he left Oxford he had contemplated a history of the Archbishops of Canterbury. Then he was to be the historian, not of the Church, but of England. (P. 103.) Next, he would write, in company with his friend Boyd Dawkins, a history of Somersetshire. Then it was to be England under the Angevin kings. The occasion of his beginning the book which was to begin and end his fame, the 'Short History,' was a visit to Sir Andrew Clark, whose account of his state of health was so serious that Green 'resolved to set down a few notions which he had conceived concerning history, which might serve as an introduction to better things if he lived, and might stand for some work done if he did not.' *

Sir Andrew Clark's verdict was, in fact, a sentence of death. Though Green lived thirteen years after it, they were years in which he could never count upon doing a day's work in a day, when he had to live by rule, avoid all risks, and do his work in pain and weariness, and away from libraries and fellow-workers, in Continental hotels and hired rooms at San Remo and Capri. Though he could not foresee this,

* Mrs. Green's Introduction to 3rd Edition, p. xviii.

he learnt enough of his state of health to know that he must not expect many years of activity. A choice had to be made. The work which stood first in his ambition was a history of the Angevin kings of England and their predecessors the Counts of Anjou. Whilst writing this he hoped to keep himself independent—he had no private fortune—by writing for the ‘Saturday Review.’ But when he found how seriously his health was threatened he changed his plan. The Angevin book might have given him a higher standing among historians as an addition to the sum of historical knowledge. But someone else might write it. His own reading and observation, concentrated in certain periods, had extended over the whole field of English history, and gave him a right to generalise, and his consciousness of possessing an attractive style encouraged him to hope that he would find readers among the English people of whom and for whom he wrote.

He proposed to himself to write, in the intervals of illness and with comparatively little help from books, a complete history of England, or rather to rewrite the history of England on a new plan. So audacious a design alarmed his friends; but he persevered, and his reward was a literary success only to be compared with that of Macaulay’s history.

Possibly ‘short’ histories of England, France, Greece, and Rome ought not to be written at all, and it would be better that historians should confine themselves to smaller portions of time, and confess that the day of comprehensive histories is gone by. But, as Professor Stubbs reminded his hearers, ‘without due scale and proportion the reader’ (and how much more the writer!) ‘of history must be cautious, lest, having begun . . . at the Norman Conquest, we find ‘ourselves stranded at the battle of Waterloo or earlier still.’* Green observed due scale and proportion, at the cost, it is true, of more minute study; he counted the cost, and did well in paying it. Literature gains at the expense of research, and we think the sacrifice is worth the cost. He could not have written his book except so, and no one else could have written it.

We are not to suppose that his studies of English history began now. He had been studying it all his life; and, with his clear conceptions of what he knew, and vast stores of historical reading arranged in his mind and preserved by a capacious and accurate memory, he could almost have sat

* Lectures on History.

down and dictated without books a history which would have needed nothing but revision. His habit of localising history, so that the thought of a town or a county would suggest to him its complete history, gave him a double hold upon facts, and lighted them up with the 'picturesqueness' at which some would sneer, but which was great part of his power, and perhaps his most individual characteristic. To be picturesque and nothing more was justly condemned by Stubbs,* but to be both sound and picturesque was a rare power, and one which he put to the best use. Facts are as incoherent as gravel, if they are not bound together by the cement of human interest and the sequence and growth of varying conditions which make them into history. Green never forgot the organic character of history. The fault of his style is a uniformity, sometimes almost a monotony, of picturesqueness; there are not enough *longueurs* to throw the vivid portions into relief, and we sometimes feel a fatigue like that which is experienced in turning over the pages of a picture-book. This is partly owing to the extraordinary fullness and compression of his work. He could not bear to omit what had seemed to him interesting and important in the course of his reading. This may be readily understood by comparing the 'Short History' with Goldwin Smith's recent book, which covers the same tract of time, but gives a greater impression of unity, and is read with more ease, because it has more relief and variety, and because the style has more literary ease and owes less to the writer's personality. 'Readability,' Green tells us, was what he studied in the first place, and he achieved it. But it is easier to read Goldwin Smith through than Green; and the cause is that the one taxes the memory more than the other, and demands concentration of attention as well as nimbleness of apprehension.

Some of his friends who saw the work in progress doubted of its success. They wanted a narrative in chronological sequence. Green saw that real history, as acted in the stage of the world, has a dramatic character. To his mind, the contest between royal and papal authority in England was a chapter in the history of the popes, and the struggle for investitures in other countries made the position of Henry II. and Becket intelligible; whilst the single combat between these protagonists had an epic and dramatic grandeur. The history of chivalry was not to be understood by a series of

* Lectures.

tournaments and pageants. It was mixed up with the political and ecclesiastical condition of Europe, with the social condition of the noble and plebeian orders in England, the contest between king and barons, the tenure of land, the interaction of English and Norman law, the contemporary literature. The wars of the Roses were not merely a story of bloody battles and inhuman butcheries: they were the outcome of a series of social and material changes, the recrudescence of private war among a baronage brutalised by the French wars, the abuse of ransoms, the licence of great lords setting themselves above a weak central power and surrounding themselves with little armies of retainers, the holding of castles, the stealing of lands, the defiance of justice, the provincial jealousies of North and South among the lords of the Palatine counties, the Marchers, and the great commercial centres; the decay of the clerical order, the conversion of cornland into pasture, and many other social causes which provided a *milieu* in which the rival Houses of York and Lancaster rose and fell; till the destruction of the baronage enabled Edward IV. to grasp all power in his hand and crush the liberties of England, so hardly won by the people, and so loyally respected by the Lancastrian kings. Each act of the drama of English history is conceived in the same spirit; and the titles given to its successive acts, 'The Great Charter,' 'The Hundred Years' War,' 'The New Monarchy,' &c., which may sometimes seem fantastic, denote true if not exhaustive divisions of the history.

Much was said at the time of the publication about 'inaccuracy.' According to Mr. Bryce (p. 387), Green ranks for accuracy as equal to Macaulay and between Grote and Milman. Ranke and Thirlwall, Gibbon and Carlyle are in a class by themselves. Froude, we suppose, is nowhere, and Freeman, we guess, would top the list. What estimate of the value of accuracy is deducible from this? Accuracy in facts and dates may be of the highest importance, and may be of very little importance. It is comparatively unimportant if it does not interfere with right judgement of proportions, or turns cause into effect. For instance, it matters if a confusion of dates makes us think that Napoleon's march to Austerlitz, consequent on the failure of his invasion of England, was brought about (as many people think) by the battle of Trafalgar, which was fought some months later; it matters little whether the Great Charter was signed on June 15 or July 15, or Austerlitz

fought at the end of November or on December 2, though it is odd that Green should not have known two such famous dates. Froude's ignorance of the Latin name of Lisieux, which gave Freeman intense pleasure for twenty years, was of no matter whatever; his misdating of 'Moriae 'Encomium,' which, according to him, was published before it was conceived, disturbs the relations between Erasmus and More. Suppression or ignorance of prominent facts is a different thing from 'inaccuracy' in details, and should not be confounded with it.

Can instances be found where Green's inaccuracy made him ascribe events to wrong causes or mistake characters? If not, the less said about it the better. Bishop Stubbs's verdict on the work as a whole is this: 'Like other people, he made mistakes sometimes; but scarcely ever does the correction of his mistakes affect either the essence of the picture or the force of the argument'; and in such matters Stubbs speaks *ex cathedra*.

But when the 'Quarterly' accuses him of exaggerating the desolation of the land which the Saxons invaded, and asks what had become of the Roman settlement, and where were the Britons both before and after the invasion, the accusation is serious. Probably Green exaggerated; but where there are no documents knowledge is a balance of conjectures, and there is evidence that the Roman occupation affected little but the towns, that the Roman towns with their organisation were much decayed, and that the conquest was carried on much after the manner of the Hebrew conquest of the Holy Land. Many of the Britons, no doubt, survived as serfs, but the organisation of the land under Roman rule did not affect the conquerors as it did in the settled communities of Gaul and Germany. Roman law and civilisation and Celtic Christianity were as if they had not been.

Again, Green probably overrates the power of the House of Commons in Lancastrian times. The Lords overshadowed them; the Commons came into Parliament at first only to determine with what sauce they should be eaten—i.e., what taxes they should pay, and how, not whether, they should be taxed for the king's pleasure; and the revived power of the obedient Houses of the Tudor period was a different thing from the parliamentarianism of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. But Green's presentment of the subject helps to right the balance. Again, his treatment of the Great Rebellion is wrong, if it leads us to think that Pym was merely a restorer of ancient liberties

annulled by Edward IV. and Henry VII.—but, for all that, it was a return to a developement which would have brought about a similar result to that of 1640 if the baronage had not been destroyed during the Wars of the Roses. A ‘picturesque’ treatment has its dangers, and Green did not always preserve a judicial temper; he was, as Mr. Bryce confesses, stronger in perception than in judgement; but he was right in the main, and later writers have not upset him.

Mr. Rowley, in ‘Fraser,’ fired broadsides into him all along the line, and undoubtedly did him some damage. He showed that Green had ignored or missed one of Alfred’s chief battles, Ashdown. He pointed out in several instances that he had a weaker hold of contemporary chronology than of historical sequence—seeing history, as it were, rather down the page than across it, a habit especially dangerous to a writer who discarded a set chronology. He was wrong about Vimiera and Cintra. He quoted poetry from memory and did not verify. He confused Swale in Kent with Swale in Yorkshire, Hugh Latimer with a less-known namesake, one William of Orange with another. An American reviewer finds him imperfectly informed about American affairs, and hints that other specialists might find the same in other fields.

These, and many like them, are serious blemishes, all the more because Green’s facts are mostly significant, and are told in relation to the facts, and thus his conclusions are liable to be invalidated by unsound premisses. Most of the mistakes, however, could be, and have been, corrected in later editions. In some cases Green proved himself right by revealing some fact unknown to the critic, on which his conclusion was founded. But the number of inaccuracies in such a work was bound to be large. Little harm is done if the history itself is true. Green’s readers may have got from him some unverified theories, and learnt to overvalue some items in the sum of English history and to undervalue others. Freeman is a safer guide for facts, and Stubbs for theories. But Freeman leaves off in the twelfth century and Stubbs in the fifteenth, and few readers survive to his third volume. No single history can be a final authority. ‘Regular’ histories, like those of Bright and Gardiner, must be read by the side of Green. The ‘Short History’ was never meant, as the ‘Quarterly’ thought, to supersede all school histories. It

is uneven and not wholly impartial; it shows traces of having been written against time. But if the boys and girls of to-day grow up believing that the history of the English before the Conquest is that of our own nation, not of some semi-foreign race, that the Norman reigns brought England into the commonwealth of Europe and founded the mediæval Church, that the origins of law, constitution, and administration are to be found in those of the Anglo-Saxons, that the enfranchisement of the labourer was helped forward by the Black Death, that the English long-bow created the yeomanry, that the Reformation was not produced by Henry VIII.'s matrimonial failures but was a part of a European movement, that the Great Rebellion was not an accidental quarrel between Charles and Cromwell but a necessary stage in national development, that Dissent is at once a blot upon Church history and a step forward in the history of freedom, that the history of Ireland is as much to our shame as that of India is to our credit, no small part of this is the direct result of the popularity of Green's 'Short History'; and 'grave' historians might have laboured in many volumes without effecting so much. The best criticism of the book is given in his own words, 'A short book need not be shallow, and 'a large book need not be big.' (P. 249.)

The 'Short History' professes to be, and is, a history of the English people. It is a democratic history, and has a liberal bias; it is a secular history, and has an anti-clerical bias; it is a social and economical history, and has a bias against the 'pragmatic' historians, who treat history as if it was made in chancelleries, board-rooms, and the closets of kings and ministers; it is a peace history, and dislikes drum and trumpet, and it puts statesmen and bookmen above soldiers and sailors. But who cares to read a book without a bias, whether its subject be history or philosophy? If such a book exists it was stillborn.

The miracle of the 'Short History' is that it was written in five years of distressing illness, when hours given to work had to be weighed against the imperative claims of health; often away from libraries and in the discomfort of exile; and that, notwithstanding these difficulties, the careful revision of it for the 'History' published in 1877-1880 left the work, in its general scope and outline, much as it was conceived from the first. It should also be reckoned to Green's credit that he was never satisfied with his writing, and that what reads so freshly was often written and

re-written five or six times, nay, even ten times, so careful was he of workmanship.

The love of towns was one of Green's earliest feelings. And the Oxford papers are interesting in this respect, as well as intrinsically, though they fall short of his mature style, and are somewhat sketchy and fragmentary. They reflect his way of thinking and learning, proceeding from known to unknown; and where should he begin better than at home? He belonged to Oxford, both as University man and townsman, but the town had his sympathy, not his stepmother, the Welsh college. 'He was,' says Freeman,* 'a born citizen of Oxford,' and he bore a grudge against the University because it had swallowed up the liberties of the town and its *bourgeoisie*, to which his own family belonged. He loved to follow the strife of town and gown, continued through the centuries, to people the familiar streets with mediæval and eighteenth-century figures, to see the well-known buildings rise to meet successive national needs, fortress, minster, convent, and college. Archæology with him always expanded into history. All his history was set in a local frame, and this gives it a charm of its own as well as individuality and thoroughness; for to look at a subject at a different angle from other people raises and urges problems which the follower of an approved method does not always observe. He taught Freeman his method—which, after all, was *interrogare naturam*, and no novelty—and practised it with him in journeys through France and Italy, in visits at Somerleaze, and during the Somersetshire archæological excursions, in which he took so much pleasure, as he studied new streets and buildings, and turned to his own use the unsifted stores of local antiquaries. He and Freeman played at being West Saxon and Mercian till they almost believed in it. 'I was born on the right side of the 'Thames,' cries Green; and Freeman says, 'Green would 'have written different history if he had been born at 'Abingdon'—though, to be sure, by Green's own showing Oxford was once upon a time in Wessex.

The *genius loci* was to him almost a person, both here and in other towns, for wherever he went the history of a town or a building—Verona, Angers, Notre Dame at Paris—presented itself to his mind as a biography. Each town had its own character, and had been born, grown up, and grown old, with its peculiar loves and hates, friends and

* British Quarterly Review, July, 1883.

enemies; so that he could take some building as his text, and develope from it the whole story of its civic life.

Mr. Bryce tells how he reached the town of Troyes early one morning with his friends. He explored it,

‘darting hither and thither through the streets, like a dog following a scent. In two hours the work was done. . . . Green brought down to breakfast next morning an article upon Troyes, describing its characteristics and tracing its connection with the Counts of Champagne during some centuries. . . . He gave his friends an equally vivid history of Basel, which they visited the next day, though it was his first sight both of Troyes and of Basel.’*

And Freeman bursts into rhapsody—

‘And now, O Johnny, as I have been rambling over endless cities, telling the towers thereof, let me once more thank you for having first taught me to do a town as something having a being of itself, apart from the churches, castles, &c., within it.’ (P. 215.)

As the town, so the country told its story to him. He first pointed out the importance of waste tracts and forests, such as Elmet and the Andredsweald, in the history of the English invasion. The drying up of the arm of a river, the subsidence of a coast-line were to him not merely geological facts, but part of historical inductions. The ‘Making of ‘England’ is full of such inductions—*conjectura* the Latins called the art—the balance of evidence and the introduction of exterior facts not before observed to be in evidence. Thus, as Owen inferred a bird from a bone, Green inferred from the shape of the county of Oxford, marked out by Roman town limits and ecclesiastical boundaries, *plus* a later earldom out of place, the existence in Alfred’s time of a north-of-Thames portion of Wessex; and this led him on to interpret the ‘seemingly arbitrary line’ of delimitation between the Danelagh and the kingdom of Wessex as fixed by the peace of Wedmore (pp. 221, 429). He told Freeman with gusto how, having always believed ancient Verona to have stood on the left bank of the Adige—a fact forgotten for a thousand years—he had gone there and found the old cathedral with its presbytery and bishop’s chair just where he had placed it in his mind. He called it ‘guessing’; †

* Macmillan’s Magazine, 1883.

† See p. 430 (where he is speaking of ‘working English, Norman, and papal history side by side’). ‘With me the impulse to try to connect things, to find out the “why” of things, is irresistible, and even if I overdo my political guessing you’ (E.A.F.) ‘or some German will punch my head, and put things rightly and unintelligibly again.’

but such guesses as these are intuitions of genius. Guessing is easy; but to guess right is to bring in imagination to the aid of knowledge.

As Gardiner said ('Academy,' March 17, 1883), his treatment of facts was different from Freeman's.

'Freeman fixes on facts, and gazes at them till he makes them tell their secret and the secret of the men who made them. . . . That which impressed [Green] most in men was that they were alive . . . the continuous life of the race. . . . Is this consciousness of the presence of a living continuity in the race a small matter? Is it not rather the very result which the modern scientific school of historians are trying to reach? . . . high imaginative treatment.'

The succeeding works, the 'Making of England' and the 'Conquest of England,' are large essays, in which geography plays an important part. Perhaps more than any other part of Green's work they bear the impress of his direct study of nature and history, the geology which he learnt with Boyd Dawkins, the local history which Freeman taught him to value at Somerleaze and in many west country excursions with the Somerset society, and the town-lore in which so much of his historical interest was centred, from the time when he first became aware that the town of Oxford had a unity and a development of its own.

These Somersetshire excursions were looked forward to with much pleasure. Besides the local antiquaries, some of them no mean scholars, he met at Wells, Glastonbury, or Shepton such men as Guest, Earle, Dawkins, Parker, Willis, and others of like distinction. Freeman and Stubbs were always there; and the discussions were keen, and the talk brilliant. It was the 'day out' of the Oxford School, and they enjoyed it without reserve.

Want of space forbids our attempting any further description of the 'Short History'; and it is so well known, and so much has been written about it by competent authorities, that such an attempt would be an anachronism and an impertinence. But in the new light thrown upon the character, genius, and circumstances of the author by the publication of his letters, we may consider shortly the value of Green's historical work, and of the so-called 'school' to which he belonged.

The writers who formed the 'Oxford School' of history did not so much invent any new method in history as direct the attention of Englishmen to a part of their history which had been much neglected. 'Study your origins,' they said; 'modern England cannot be understood without reference

‘to ancient England.’ We all knew that the present grows out of the past, but were content to leave it so. It was the work of Stubbs, Freeman, and Green to rescue mediæval England from the hands of antiquaries and romancers, and make it live in our minds as a reality, not merely a museum of dusty and unsifted facts and fictions and stories about people who ‘were never alive’ to us, though there is no doubt that they once lived and looked upon the earth.

By the Oxford historians we mean principally Stubbs, Freeman, and Green; for Goldwin Smith, though he still lives to charm us by the beauty of his style and to instruct us by his insight and knowledge, was at that time too eager a partisan to be a trustworthy historian; and Froude, who surpassed them all in intellectual brilliancy, was a historical heretic, and painted men, like Æschylus, rather as they ought to be than as they were; he dealt with historical facts and persons as Turner did with castles and hills, ‘playing them about boldly like chessmen,’ says Ruskin in one of his least conscientious moments; whilst Stanley, the ‘Professor of Pictorial Theology,’ was often led away by his imagination into vagaries of comparison and courageous analogies of things which might have been, but were not, as he in all good faith represented them; and had neither leisure to be learned nor taste for the severe drudgery which is necessary to establish facts. Of the three, Stubbs was much the strongest man. He had the industry of a German, the comprehensive learning of a scholar of the Renaissance, and the good sense and freedom from ‘enthusiasm’ of a Gibbon or a Porson. His astonishing accuracy was the result of a vast memory and infinite perseverance in verifying facts. As compared with Gibbon, whilst he comes short of him in comprehensive knowledge of all literature and power of illustration from the whole field of history, he studied original authorities much more deeply. He knew the chroniclers as Gibbon knew his Tacitus and Gregory of Tours and the Byzantine historians. But Gibbon read nothing that was not in print. Stubbs read hundreds of manuscripts and studied English history by the light of all that is known of contemporary annals, adding to this a mass of archæological knowledge of cities, castles, and churches, and of obscure documents such as court-rolls, royal and ecclesiastical writs, Acts of Parliament, and local charters.

Freeman was great in detail. He had no sense of proportion and little power to distinguish right and wrong in his

judgements of men and motives. He wrote as a partisan, whether his subject was the character of a man, the date of a church, or the spelling of a name. His Harold, Godwine, and William challenge all comers to controvert his portraiture of them. He reminds us of Leech's critic, who asks for a 'candid opinion,' and adds, 'I'll knock any man 'down who says so!' Like Nelson, he 'hated Frenchmen 'like the devil,' and pelted them with merciless broadsides whenever he found them, besides absurdly calling them 'Welchmen.' In his own region he was a pedant and a precisian. His wide and accurate knowledge of universal history preserved him from shallowness, but not from partiality; and his industry and determined perseverance in the search for truth guarded him from much error, though they did not teach him to be fair to antagonists or to preserve philosophic calm in investigating the past.

What distinguished Freeman from other writers and gave him a well-deserved influence was his vigour and vitality, and his robust contempt for smatterers and amateurs, amongst whom he most unjustly reckoned his great antagonist Froude. Green never posed as a great historian. He sat at the feet of Stubbs and Freeman as masters, and he may possibly be remembered when Stubbs is 'superseded' by writers whose study of parchment collectively exceeds his, and when Freeman is looked upon rather as a writer of monographs than a historian.

The 'Oxford School' set up no theories of philosophical history. Their object was to investigate the truth. Their predecessors in the field of ancient and mediæval history (of whom Stubbs always spoke with respect) had somewhat too readily accepted the evidence of current narrative; and, avoiding this error, they proceeded in a strictly scientific manner. They established facts and dates in the pre-documentary ages by the evidence of earthworks, barrows and dykes, place-names, local customs, and ecclesiastical legends. For a later date they read documents of all kinds, and studied seals, churches, castles, and monasteries—thus laying in archæology a foundation for history. When they came down to the professed annalists, they made a distinction between chroniclers who knew facts at first hand and chroniclers who only copied their predecessors or repeated tradition. They settled the date of 'Ingulphus,' and a good deal of the fabric of early history fell down. They established the principle that in primeval history direct narrative must be supported by external evidence to

be accepted. They were not content, with Herodotus, to put down priestly narratives for true, saving their own reputation with an *ἐμὸι μὲν οὐ πιθανὰ λέγοντες*, but insisted on sound foundations, whatever might come to be built on them.

The method then was scientific, working through archæology. Theory stepped in where one set of established facts was compared with a similar set of later date. How, for instance, did the judicial system of Henry II. differ from that of Alfred? What new elements had been imported? Whence did they come? What part in the shaping of England was borne by Roman law, imperial or papal, the institutions of Northmen, Danes, and Normans, working on those of England, themselves full of local and provincial differences? It is not too much to say that in this concentration of interest on English origins through the medium of archæology, Stubbs (who always acknowledged freely his obligations to English and German writers, past and present) was the creator of a new method.

This is aside of, and to some degree independent of, political history, the narrative of war and peace, royal marriages and alliances, the rise and fall of ministries; apart, too, from the considerations of intellectual and spiritual movements, and from the lives of great men; all subjects of the highest interest, and in their way not less important than the growth of institutions. Here Stubbs drew the line. His business was to investigate facts. *Hypotheses non fingo*, he might have said with Newton; and he may have been too suspicious of historians who traced in the succession of events the evolution of economical and political causes, *periculosæ plenum opus alæ*.

Ranke, of whom Stubbs speaks (with more reverence than Green) as one of the greatest of historians, is the chief name among those historians who look upon history from a contemporary point of view, who find the interpretation of events in the letters of ambassadors, the treaties and political correspondence, the relation of states and statesmen of the same time. Green calls him 'pragmatic,' and complains of his 'external' and 'political' conception of history; but confesses that

'there is such a just aversion to "philosophies of history," on account of the nonsense which has passed under that name, that it is quite likely people may turn away from a story which' (like his own) 'strives to put facts on a philosophical basis, and to make events the outcome of social or religious currents of thought.' (P. 359.) 'Every word I

have written in reviews and essays through the last ten years went to the same point, to a protest, that is, against the tendency to a merely external political view of human affairs, and to a belief that political history to be intelligible and just must be based on social history in its largest sense.' (P. 426.)

It is clear that two different modes of procedure are before us: to treat each period as an independent section, and to examine the growth of a nation or an institution by comparing it with the same thing in previous centuries; to read, that is (as we said), across the page or down the page; and that to attribute such evolution principally to social and moral causes introduces theory, and with it an element of insecurity. But the perfect history brings in theory too, in its proper place, and with cautions against its abuse.

Methods of history are not so completely different after all, and we need not to put our historians in this or that list. All apply like tests in the investigation of facts; all search for motives of action to explain the facts; all recognise causes independent of conscious motive. No one denies great men's power of guiding events; no one denies that they can only act within the limitations of their time and their personal circumstances. All allow that the lessons of the past have their place in the present. History is neither archaeology nor politics, but partakes of both. It cannot settle its facts without archaeology, nor help us to think rightly without applying the lessons of past politics to the present and the future.

We shall miss Green if we seek him in the camp of the archaeologists or in that of the political theorists. Of course, in a sense, he belonged to both. As an inquirer into origins he was an archaeologist; as a narrator of events he could not ignore the conquering generals and treaty-making ministers who can turn Germans into Frenchmen and Poles into Prussians. But he was, above all, a believer in social and moral forces, a preacher and moralist, and thought that history was dwarfed by the 'politicals.' He was angry with Seeley for confounding history and politics. 'The end of the study of history is to make a man' not a historian, but 'a politician'! What is the end, then, of the study of politics—or does he consider them one and the same? Seriously, Kingsley never talked such rubbish as this. (P. 240.)

Seeley pronounced that history is 'the school of States-

'manship.'* He put contemporary history above past history. He valued past history, not as a storehouse of great deeds and great warnings, nor as a portrait gallery of great men, nor for its poetical and dramatic interest, but as a guide towards acting in the present and judging the future. If not directly practical it was worthless. He would, we presume, include in its definition the old definition of 'philosophy teaching by examples,' which agrees with Thucydides' conception, but confined it to its bearing on the politics of to-day. There is much to be said for this view; but it narrows history from being a branch of science and a part of human philosophy to one function only, that of directing present action. A most important function, truly; but only one man in ten thousand can use it so. The lessons of history may have instructed those who suffered by them, but few modern statesmen or voters profit by them. Still, we must not forget that, if Seeley's doctrine of past events producing present men and their actions made him represent Napoleon as little more than part of his environment, he was able, by putting forth the true paradox that the Continental wars of the eighteenth century were the unconscious stirrings of the English race for oceanic empire, to produce a great effect on public opinion, and give an impulse to the imperial idea which now absorbs us all. But Seeley was the one in ten thousand. The danger of his view of history is that its scientific pretensions may set up a claim to establish conclusions which may be used deductively. Again, this conceit of science tends to make the Seeley school dry and empty of emotion. Seeley and Ranke work in a Spencerian spirit, aiming at generalisation and classification rather than inquiring what were the faiths and aspirations of past ages. Inquirers of this stamp want to know what was done, and how it was done, not why it was done. The contest between a town and its oppressor the neighbouring earl or bishop does not move them into sympathy. They investigate the causes, political, economical, and geographical, of the rise and decline of Winchester, York, or Liverpool. The feelings of the oppressed or victorious citizens they pass by as not to the purpose. 'Men and women, gentlemen!' Kingsley used to say, who though he taught at Cambridge had little of the spirit of that place. And so

* Inaugural Address at Cambridge, 'The Teaching of Politics.' Lectures and Essays by J. R. Seeley, 1870.

long as history is made by men and women, historians will be right who look upon men and women as actors in history, not 'impotent pieces of the game.' Both schools have their value, neither can do without the other; but Spencerian generalisation and classification are dry and cold; we cannot dispense with our heroic kings and weeping queens. To leave out the story of human joys and sorrows in history, to exclude the epic and dramatic interest, is like considering Gothic architecture as a series of problems of weight and thrust and an evolution of mouldings and traceries, without taking into account the sense of beauty and proportion.

It is characteristic of Green that his love of country made him look upon his own line as 'the old traditional line of English historians.'

'Contrast,' he writes to Freeman, 'your tone with Pauli's, for instance, or even Gardiner's with Ranke. . . . I don't doubt that the English ideal of history will in the long run be what Gibbon made it in his day, the first in the world; because it can alone combine the love of accuracy and external facts with the sense that government and outer facts are but the outcome of individual men, and men what body, mind, and spirit make them.' (P. 427.)

As for the 'great men' theory, each writer according to the set of his mind thinks of men as individuals or as parts of a society. If the former, he brings into relief their differences; if the latter, their resemblances. The individualist finds in Thucydides or Tacitus a vivid picture of an existing society; the philosophical inquirer compares these with other states of society, and tries to find out under what differences of conditions similar causes produce different results, or *vice versa*, and how the differentiating circumstances were evolved out of former conditions. The differences between the two lines of thought are rather matter of temperament than of philosophy, and the true method must combine both.

Green belonged by temperament to the individualists. His men and women are all alive; their conscious motives interest him as much as the inherited instincts, political necessities, and economical conditions which modify their actions. He believed in leaders, and his pages are full of single portraits; Alfred, Dunstan, Henry II., Chaucer, More, Marlborough, are among the most striking. And besides and beyond the leaders there was the body of the nation with its common interests, hopes, fears, and beliefs, making for themselves the history which Green chiefly cared for, as their political history was made for them by their rulers.

If Green had written his history of the Angevin kings, as

his friends wished, it would have gone on the shelf by the side of Freeman's 'Conquest.' It would have been read by scholars, and he might have been known as a great historian instead of a popular historian. But he knew the bent of his own genius, and when to follow or to disregard advice. He was not ashamed to write the history of the English people for the instruction of the English people. The immense popularity of the 'Short History' does not detract from its merits as history, for it was written for an educated public, and is a work of learning and judgement, as well as a piece of excellent literature; and its educational value outweighs that of many books making higher claims to research and science.

ART. VIII.—1. *The Select Pleas of the Forest*. Edited for the Selden Society by G. J. TURNER, M.A., Barrister-at-Law. London: Bernard Quaritch. 1901.

2. *A Treatise of the Laws of the Forest*. By JOHN MANWOOD. Third Edition. London: 1665.

THE existence and the publications of the Selden Society are an emphatic and practical contradiction of the pessimistic assertion that the world does not now interest itself in any works but those of ephemeral literature. The same statement was often on the lips of our forefathers, and it is repeated by the diarist of to-day just as it was in the daily jottings of Madame d'Arblay. But in the Selden Society we have a voluntary body publishing documents bearing not only on the legal but the social history of England, issued in an agreeable form at which the Stationery Office, which is responsible for the publications of the Historical Manuscripts Commission, would be aghast. Form cannot alter the substance of a publication, but for the purpose of the study and of the proper preservation of a book it is of more importance than the Treasury seems to suppose. If we look back over the volumes issued by the Selden Society since 1887, the value of these publications is at once obvious, for they enable the legal and historical student to form for himself just opinions on the past and to survey realities. It would be ungracious to criticise severely the legal commentators of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: they did their best on often insufficient materials; but the Selden Society's publications enable us to correct statements which were often the result of mere guesswork, and, frequently aided by the lucid introductions of the editors, to reconstruct the past from original documents; for it is chiefly in legal archives that we find the materials for the social history of the Middle Ages. As we move into the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, statutes and State papers, news-letters and private correspondence, become numerous, but in a previous age the surest guides are the facts which exist, incontrovertible and real, in the records of courts of law.

The interest and value of the 'Select Pleas of the Forest,' the latest of the publications of the Selden Society, lie in the fact that the volume enables us better than has ever been previously possible to picture for ourselves a social and political phase of mediæval England, a phase as important as that of the town life or the maritime life of the nation. Up to the

date of the publication of this book the work of Manwood, first published in 1598 and continued through various editions, has been the authority to which it has been usual to refer for information on the forest laws. But that treatise is an excellent instance of how a legal imagination can create legal fictions. Manwood constructed an ingenious but altogether fanciful and untrue social contract. In return for the continual care and labour which he gave to the preservation of the whole realm, the king was presented by his subjects with the prerogative of having places of recreation and pastime wherever he might desire, and so he could make a forest at his will and pleasure for the shelter of beasts of the chase. Bracton long before Manwood's time had evolved the theory that as no private person had a property in wild animals they must therefore be the property of the king. If one could imagine a royal right over, we need not say property in, a red deer or a wild boar, it was easy to construct a theoretical right in the sovereign to have places where certain animals might be secure from the pursuit of any man except the sovereign or one who was authorised to hunt by him. But Bracton had also formulated the doctrine that occupancy was the basis of the right to property, and it was this doctrine which the Norman kings carried into practice. But something more than this was needed to justify many of their acts, for they were not careful at all times to respect private rights, and afforested whole towns or villages, when they created a forest with its indefinite metes and bounds; and so a more elaborate theory, such as that of Manwood, was needed to give even a semblance of legal propriety to their conduct.

But the prerogative of the king to have and enjoy royal forests rose from simple causes, partly from the fact that he was the only distinct representative of the State, and partly from superior individual power. The property of the Saxon sovereign in wastes and forests, which appears to have been taking the place of an equally vague communal right, indefinite enough in its extent as it must have been, passed to the Conqueror when he was crowned at Westminster. From his own strength, from the weakness of his subjects, and from the disturbance, resulting from the Conquest, of the old order both of property and of Government, he had the opportunity of increasing the number of places unquestionably within the forestal jurisdiction of the sovereign. The king could, in fact, assert an actual forestal right over any part of the country which was not clearly the undoubted property of one of his subjects, and even then some excuse might be made

for its forfeiture to the Crown. As he moved about his kingdom, passing from castle to castle and from town to town, opportunities constantly arose for him to gratify his desire for the extension of his territorial influence and power, and his passion for the chase. Thus in an inquiry as to the right to the bailiwick of the forests of the counties of Leicester and Rutland, we meet with an instance of what appears to be purely arbitrary afforestation:—

‘ Upon a search among and an inspection of the rolls of the eyre of Geoffrey of Langley and his fellow-justices in eyre for pleas of the forest at Oakham in the thirty-third year of the lord king who now is, it is found that it was presented and proved before the same justices in their eyre by twenty-four sworn knights and loyal men of the county of Rutland that when King Henry I., the son of king William the Bastard, was on his way towards northern parts, he passed through a certain wood, which is called Riseborough, in the county of Leicester. And there he saw five hinds. And he forthwith ordered a certain servant of his by name Pichard, to tarry in those parts until his return from the parts aforesaid, and in the meantime to guard the said hinds for his use. But it happened that in that year the said king did not return there; and in it the said Pichard associated himself to a certain serjeant of the same country who was called Hasculf of Allextun, whose house he frequented much. But when the year was passed, after the aforesaid king had returned from the northern parts, the said Pichard came to the king aforesaid, saying that he was unwilling to be custodian of the aforesaid bailiwick any longer. And on being then asked by the same king who would be a fit person to be custodian of the said bailiwick, he replied, the said Hasculf, who had lands near there, and was resident in the same bailiwick. And then the said king entrusted to the aforesaid Hasculf the custody of the said bailiwick, to wit, the forestry of the county of Leicester and also of Rutland; and he was custodian of it all his time, and he lived for a long time, that is to say till the time of king Stephen, and was then killed in his own house by Bartholomew de Verdun. And after the death of this Hasculf, a certain Peter, his son, received the custody of the aforesaid bailiwick from king Henry, the grandfather of the lord king who now is.’ (P. 45.)

It is a picturesque and suggestive glimpse which the old roll gives of the mediæval monarch journeying with knights and retainers through the strong growing woodlands of the English midlands, the herd of shy deer suddenly perceived in some opening in the forest, and the quick inquiry as to who was the warden of the wood. There was doubt and hesitation as to the ownership of the property, which was soon ended by the king giving to Pichard—probably a Frenchman—the bailiwick, and charging him, partly in jest and partly in earnest, to guard the five hinds till he again

came south. A district could be afforested in a moment by the mere word of the monarch ; it took centuries to free it from the royal dominion. By a simple act indicative of his right to occupy it, the king could take possession of acres of unowned land ; but whilst he took the land as the supreme head of his people, he forgot both their wants and their natural feelings. What the peasant or the villager resented was not so much the assertion of a royal title to the forest, the woods, and the waste, even the mere pleasure of the chase, as the fact that this assertion prevented the enjoyment by the people of property of which the king was no more than a trustee, but which he treated as the gift of heaven to an anointed and beneficent autocrat, not seldom exercising his prerogative so as to cast his dominion over cultivated land, hamlets, houses, and small towns which up to that time had been free from the restrictions of the forest laws.

In Norman England there were great tracts of almost uninhabited country, and nothing, as the instance just presented shows, was easier than for the king, as the chief personage in the land, to assert his paramount right to these portions of his kingdom in the simple manner which the chronicle describes. It was a right which appealed at once to the natural instincts of a man who, after all, was only a half-civilised ruler, and to the rude but necessary demands of his exchequer. So far, however, from there being any kind of contract between governor and governed in regard to forests, the whole course of mediæval politics shows a steady endeavour by the sovereign often to enlarge and always to retain his forestal jurisdiction against the will of his subjects, and equally constant though fluctuating efforts on the part of the barons and of the people to lessen both the power of the Crown and the territorial extent of the royal forests. But though all classes were united in a common animosity to the forestal dominion of the king they had no common sympathies. A baron would have been quite as harsh a forest lord as a king ; indeed, when, as in parks, the baron had his own miniature forest, the penalties against trespassers were more severe than in the king's forest. The aristocratic poacher who made deer traps in the bounds of his park as near to the royal forest as possible, sometimes so close that he was summoned before the justices for a nuisance, for an offence against the forest law, had not an atom of mercy for the peasant who should, within the bounds of the park, kill one of the

truant deer or cut a limb from an oak or an elm. Another point should be noted in this connexion. We must not regard the king in the assertion of his prerogative as an unreasonable tyrant; it is useless to try and evolve theories unsupported by the experience of primitive mankind as to the right to unoccupied land in an uncivilised community, and there was no reason why the king, as representative of the nation, should not become the owner of waste land as much as a baron or a peasant; nor should it be forgotten that the payments received from the forest were not always employed by the sovereign for his mere personal pleasure. For just as in the royal forests there were special courts and special laws side by side with the ordinary tribunals and jurisprudence which were applicable to the rest of England, so too in the forests we perceive a source of revenue having no relation to scutage and carucage and feudal dues, a revenue which could be collected by the king's officials without the consent of the national council.

This contest between Crown and people is observable from the moment of the Conqueror's death. William Rufus made the practice of the forest custom 'burdensome to baron and 'villein alike,' but in the very year of the accession of his successor, Henry I. obtained a vague and popular ratification of his title. 'I retain,' he says in the Charter* of 1100, 'by the common consent of my barons, my forests as my fathers had theirs.' Henry I. was a mighty hunter, and he increased the royal forestal possessions so that Stephen was obliged to promise, by the Charter of 1136, to relinquish the forests afforested by Henry. But the undertaking made to his people was not kept, and again, in 1184, we perceive in the Assize of Woodstock of Henry II. an attempt by the barons to modify the severity of the forest laws, and to render them more definite. These struggles, indicative of the social importance of the forests and the forest laws, were to a certain degree ended by the Charter of the Forest of 1217. But these continual edicts would have been constitutionally absurd if the king had a theoretical and prerogative right to make forests where he pleased, since he would have been endowed with an undisputed personal power which could be

* The Charter of the Forest of Canute was a forgery: this, though oftensurmised, seems now to be certain; see Liebermann, 'Ueber Pseudo-Cnuts Constitutiones de Foresta.' Halle, 1894. This writer ascribes this document to the year 1184, and as being the work of a layman. Dr. Stubbs and Dr. Freeman each doubted its authenticity, but many writers have accepted it with naïve simplicity.

employed not only for the exaction of all sorts of fines and aids, but for the increase of the actual property of the sovereign.

In those troubled ages, and when might was largely right, it is easy to realise the continual extension of the forestal dominion of the king, a dominion which was primarily obnoxious to the barons, not, as we have said, from any love of the common people, but because it necessarily lessened their own power. To counteract this increasing dominion of the Crown was the motive which obtained from the infant Henry III. in 1217 the Charter of the Forest, a necessary sequel, in the then existing polity and social condition of England, of the Great Charter. It marks the end of the unlicensed forestal power of the sovereign, it defines the extent of his dominion—it was a constitutional landmark, a document the vague limitations of which the sovereign was for a long time constantly trying to evade and the people to enforce. The king had often to confirm Magna Charta—‘these repeated confirmations tell us how hard it is to bind the king by law. The pages of the chroniclers are full of complaints that the terms of the charter are not observed. . . . This theoretical sanctity and this practical insecurity are shared with the great Charter of Liberties by the Charter of the Forest.’*

The Charter of the Forest by its very terms reveals the evils under which the country had suffered in the two preceding reigns, and more especially under the rule of John. His despotism, his exactions, and his antagonism to his barons had made his power as chief lord of the forests a national curse, and so all the woods which had been made part of the royal forests either by Richard or by John were to be summarily disafforested: ‘*Omnes autem bosci*,’ runs this memorable article, ‘*qui fuerunt afforestati per regem Ricardum avunculum nostrum, vel per regem Johannem patrem nostrum usque ad primam coronationem nostram, statim deafforestentur, nisi fuerit dominicus boscus noster.*’ This declaration was a recognition on the part of the young king’s advisers—for the charter was issued with the seals of William Marshall, Earl of Pembroke, and of Gualo, the papal legate—of a multitude of illegalities in the stormy reign which was lately ended. Contrast it with the previous article, and the difference between them is at once obvious. In the one case there is to be absolute relinquish-

* Maitland, ‘Hist. of English Law,’ i. 158.

ment, in the other there is to be inspection, and, if need be, disafforestation, when woods have been taken to the damage of their owners; a direction which is suggestive rather of mistakes in uncertain boundaries than of downright royal rapacity:—

‘Imprimis omnes forestæ quas Henricus rex avus noster afforestavit, videantur per bonos et legales homines; et si boscum aliquem alium quam suum dominicum afforestaverit ad dampnum illius cujus boscus fuerit, deafforestentur. Et si boscum suum proprium afforestaverit, remaneat foresta, salva communia de herbagio et aliis in eadem foresta illis qui eam prius habere consueverunt.’

That the king's forests, even those which may, by something like a misuse of language, be termed his property, should need delimitation is not remarkable when we bear in mind the actual nature of a mediæval royal forest. It was assumed to be a definite tract of land within which a particular body of law was enforced, a district including both woods and open country. But within this boundary private persons might have lands, though in them they could neither cut wood nor kill certain wild animals, yet, speaking broadly, both woodland and open land belonged to the king. It is difficult enough in times of advanced civilisation for men to know accurately the limits of landed property; to suppose that in the thirteenth century, in an often uncultivated, uninhabited, and roadless district, the bounds of the king's possessions could be definitely fixed, even though some metes and bounds were stated, is obviously absurd. This very uncertainty rendered the royal forests an easy source of revenue, sometimes by means of fines justly levied, more often than not by demands which were simply illegal exactions. But, though vexatious imposts, these were not severe punishments; no feature, indeed, of the forest laws is more to be noted than the comparative mildness of the punishments, and they were lenient for a very good reason. Fine a man to-day and he lived to be fined to-morrow; kill him, and in those days of sparsely inhabited counties a taxpayer had been destroyed. Thus the forest—although Manwood, as we have seen, had invented an agreeable theory of a social contract, pleasure given in return for work—was usually regarded by the mediæval monarch from the same point of view as that of a modern Chancellor of the Exchequer who looks upon this subject or that as a fruitful source of revenue. That the English forests could by any possibility be generally used by the king for the purposes of sport, though in theory and practice they were

his preserves, is obviously impossible when we bear in mind their number and size. 'King John, when in England, 'spent much of his time in visiting the forests of Sherwood, 'Rockingham, Essex, and Clarendon, and it was from these 'that Henry III. usually made presents of game to his 'friends.' These particular wastes and woodlands, however, were mere selections from the numerous royal forests. To state with any degree of accuracy either the extent or the number of the whole is as yet impossible, and will probably remain so. But 'it is almost certain that none of the kings 'of England possessed any forests in the counties of Norfolk, 'Suffolk, and Kent . . . it may be considered as probable 'that there were either no forests in Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire, and Hertfordshire, or forests of a small extent 'only'; while in Lancashire they were granted by Edward I. to his brother, Edmund Crouchback, who was allowed to enforce the forest laws over the forests which it contained.

On the other hand, all Northamptonshire and all Rutland were a tract of forest, while 'one vast forest stretched from 'Stafford to Worcester, and from the Wrekin to the Trent,'* and certainly at the time of Domesday a densely wooded district—broken later doubtless in the fertile Vale of Aylesbury—extended from Brill on the borders of Oxfordshire across the Chilterns to Burnham and the Thames, of which in the still wooded heights of the chalky uplands of Buckinghamshire the picturesque traces are to this day visible. The New Forest is, however, at the present time the most striking example of the mediæval forest which has preserved its continuity as a royal forest from the time of the Conqueror. It has undergone changes in form and size, but it is with us to-day the same picturesque tract of woodland, heath, and cultivated spaces as in the time of Edward I. It has continued to be part of the royal demesne—in modern language, of the property of the Crown—century after century, whereas in Epping we have a forest the soil of nearly the whole of which was granted before the reign of Henry II. in the form of manors to private persons or to religious houses, though over the entire district a particular prerogative of the Crown was maintained, and it was a royal forest subject to the forestal laws, to the preservation of the venison, the vert and the waste within its bounds.

But the non-existence of royal forests did not mean that the country was necessarily completely cultivated. It only

* Pearson, 'Historical Maps,' pp. 47-52.

implied that the chase, the park, and the warren—the private preserves of noblemen where the forest laws did not exist—were general to a greater degree than in those parts of England, such as the great district between Stamford in the North-East and Oxford in the West, where by means fair or foul the king had established a recognised forestal dominion.

When we call to mind the variety of beasts which are to be found in half-civilised districts in various parts of the world it is impossible not to be struck with the limited number of animals which were preserved in the royal forests of the thirteenth century. The writer of the Introduction to the ‘Select Pleas of the Forest,’ after a careful examination of many documents relating to forests in various parts of England, thus sums up his researches on this point:—

‘Thus it may be confidently asserted that there were in general four beasts of the forest, and four only—the red deer, the fallow deer, the roe, and the wild boar, the only exception being that in a few districts the hare was also made the subject of the forest laws.’

The hare was indirectly preserved by the Assize of Worcester (1184), which prohibited greyhounds and dogs from being brought into the forest, not because they were likely to pursue the hares, but because their presence was dangerous to the deer. Why the hare should have been preserved in some places—as, for example, in the warren of Somerton—one cannot guess, but that it was is clear by more than one entry in the Somerset Eyre of 1257:—

‘It is presented,’ says the record, ‘by the same persons and proved that on Monday in Christmas week in the forty-first year a certain hare was found dead. An inquisition was made thereof by the four townships of Somerton, Kingsdon, Pitney, and Wearne, who say that the said hare died of murrain, and that they know of nothing else except misadventure. And because the said townships did not come fully, &c., therefore they are in mercy.’ (P. 42.)

There is something rather suggestive of the comic opera in four townships sitting in judgement on the body of a dead hare. Probably it was the insignificance of the creature, as well as the serious consequences resulting to the neighbouring districts from the death of an animal of the forest, that practically prevented the hare from being a beast of the forest. Why, we repeat, there should have been some exceptional districts where the hare was preserved is a question now impossible to answer.

The mediæval forest was in fact essentially a deer forest. The nearest likenesses to it in these days are, as well as the

New Forest,* the districts in Devon and Somerset where the red deer is still protected and strays unharmed over a picturesque country, woodland, moorland, and hill pasture. The wild boar was to be seen too, but already, by the middle of the thirteenth century, it had become scarce. There are entries in the Gloucestershire Rolls of 1258 which tell of its preservation and unlawful slaying, but from a point which may be taken at this particular date the wild boar is scarcely mentioned.

The wolf, as one can very well believe, was as much a poacher as any hungry outlaw, and it is surprising that Manwood should have included it in the list of beasts of the forest. For the object of those in charge of the royal forests was, from an early date, to destroy an animal which in the winter was as injurious to the deer as to the men who lived in the cottages or hamlets adjacent to a forest. Thus from the thirteenth year of the reign of Henry II. a hunter received an annual allowance, charged upon the Sheriff's farm, for hunting wolves in the county of Worcester, and by letters patent issued in 1281 the king directed a hunter named Peter Corbet to take and destroy all wolves in the counties of Gloucester, Worcester, Hereford, Salop, and Stafford. These are but two instances; they show, however, systematic endeavours to exterminate a noxious animal.

Another beast, harmless in itself, occupies a somewhat curious place, and that is the roe deer. It was a beast of the forest during the thirteenth century, but at this time it was decided that it ought not to remain in this category because it drove away other kinds of deer. In the eye of the forester it occupied the same position as the harmless chub does in a well-managed Hampshire trout fishery. The most suggestive point about this exclusion is that it was arrived at by a legal decision, so that no example could better indicate the importance of English law as illustrating the social history of the age. The decision was given in the reign of Edward III. by the Court of King's Bench. Henry de Percy put forward a claim to have woodwards carrying bows and arrows in his woods in his manor of Seamer, which was within the forest of Pickering, and also to have the right of hunting and taking roes, as well within the covert of the forest as outside. The Earl of Lancaster, to

* For an account of Wolmer Forest see 'Rural Life in Hampshire,' Chapter IV., 'The Royal Forests,' by W. W. Capes. London: 1901.

whom the king had granted the forest and all his rights over it, opposed the latter of these claims on the ground that the roe was a beast of the forest, and that the right demanded was against the assize of the forest. The justices in eyre adjourned the claim for consideration to the Court of King's Bench. This tribunal, after consultation with the great officers of state, and after diligent deliberation, delivered their judgement, with the conclusion: 'Caprioli sunt bestie de warennia et non de foresta eo quod fugant alias feras de foresta.' Roe were not beasts of the forest but of the warren, and for the practical reason that they caused other kinds of deer to leave the woods.

The protection of the deer in the royal forests necessarily involved the indirect protection of other wild animals, hares, and even cats, and of numerous kinds of wild birds; for a man who wandered in the woods of a royal forest to net a pheasant was likely to disturb the deer, and so could be stopped by the foresters. Such indirect protection, as time passed on, produced a general preservation of game—to give it the modern name—sufficient to cause the writers of an age later than the thirteenth century often to suppose that such birds as the partridge or the mallard were birds of the forest. But all the creatures other than those already enumerated were beasts or fowls of warren, a place wholly distinct from a forest, and under neither the jurisdiction of the forest laws nor the supervision of the officials of the forest. A warren was, in fact, a portion of the waste of the countryside or of the unenclosed demesne land of a private individual, over which the poorest peasant could roam in pursuit of animals at will, apparently in theory by the implied leave of the king. From the moment, however, that by virtue of his royal prerogative the king granted the sole right to hunt other than forestal animals to a private individual within the bounds mentioned in the grant, a warren was brought into existence, giving therefore in many cases to private persons a privilege in addition to the ordinary right of ownership, which they did not before possess. Out of the unenclosed land the king could of course create a warren for himself, and sometimes he would indirectly nullify the effect of the Charter of the Forest by creating warrens in a disafforested district. One, indeed, of the articles of the barons' petition in the Parliament of 1258 demanded a remedy because out of the disafforested districts warrens were created which were contrary to the public rights

granted by the Charter. That a warren was wholly distinct from a forest is shown also by a suggestive decision which is recorded in the Rolls of Hilary Term, 1284, in which, in an action of assault against a warrener, the latter pleaded that the plaintiff's men were hunting in the abbot's warren. The plaintiff in his reply to this defence averred that he was in pursuit of a buck in a place where all the country could hunt. In the result, though it was proved that the spot was a warren, it was held that the defendant should be in mercy because the buck was not a beast of the warren. But we must repeat that this difference necessarily became obscure in course of time, and was undoubtedly affected by local circumstances. For the king could grant away one of his forests or a part of it to a private individual; thereupon a chase was created—in other words, a tract of country once part of a royal forest, but free from the forest law, yet at the same time a preserve of deer and of woods, for the pleasure and the benefit of the king's grantee. Thus in some places warrens may have become united with forests; in others, as the royal authority in respect of forests grew weaker, deer would be preserved by private persons in their warrens, with the result that a local historian might very well state that animals and birds were forestal which on its inception were not really forestal creatures.

The existence of a forest brought into being, as a necessary consequence, a host of officials, to each of whom the forest meant his own continuance in power and prosperity. They were the civil servants of the Middle Ages, conspicuous over nearly every part of England, and constant reminders both to the secular and the ecclesiastical lords, as well as to every peasant, of the power of the Crown. We may almost regard them as in the same position as the Government officials in modern France, who are to be found in every country town. Nothing was easier than for them to become the petty tyrants of the village, and to extort money for themselves as well as for the royal purse. Norman Sampson, under Geoffrey of Childwick, steward of the forest of Huntingdon in 1255, was one of this kind, and he thus figures in the Huntingdon eyre of 1255. It is presented that he

‘took a certain man at Weybridge who was with the parson of Colworth, . . . and he took the said man to Houghton to the house of William Dering his host, and he put him upon a harrow, and pained him sorely, so that William gave to him twelve pence that he might be

released from the said pains, and afterwards he gave to him five shillings that he might by his aid be able to withdraw quit.

'It is also presented by the same persons of the same person that a certain Norman, his page, and he himself were evildoers to the venison of the lord king, and that Norman Sampson sold three oaks in Weybridge and committed many other trespasses while he was a forester.' (P. 20.)

And so, after various proceedings, Norman Sampson is fined two marks. Imagination is not needed to picture this little drama—the poor man brought to the farm and cruelly and ingeniously tortured, the money paid to the brutal forester, who, unpopular among his fellows, is himself brought before the justices in eyre and fined in his turn. There were many grades of forest officials, and so one may be sure that there were not lacking official disagreements and personal jealousies.

In 1238 England, for the purpose of forest administration, was divided into two provinces—one north and one south of the Trent, and over each of these two departments there was placed a justice of the forest. The title is a little misleading, since it suggests a legal rather than a ministerial officer. These personages were, in fact, head foresters. Mathew Paris actually speaks of one of these men as *summus anglie forestarius*, as well as *summus justiciarius foreste*, and the first description better explains their functions; for except that it was part of their duty to release on bail prisoners who were in custody they performed no judicial act at all, and 'in general carried out all the executive work relating to 'the forests.' For a time, at the beginning of the fourteenth century, these men seem to have been called wardens, but by the year 1377 the old designation was resumed. To manage a tract of country so immense as that over which their jurisdiction extended was obviously beyond the power of two officials, and therefore deputies were appointed, either by the justice himself or by the king. The justices

'were usually men of considerable political standing. . . . By the end of the fourteenth century the office evidently became a sinecure, being then usually held by a nobleman of rank. But though a sinecure the income attached to it was certainly not derived solely from an official salary, for from the close of the thirteenth century the justices of the forest south of the Trent received from the king an annual payment of a hundred pounds only, and the salary of the justices of the forest north of the Trent was only two-thirds of that sum.'

Whether the lieutenants of these men were not also the wardens seems not to be so certain as the editor of the

Selden Society's volume considers. In a state of society so rude as that of mediæval England, and in the country districts, a strict division of offices is impossible, and the editor remarks that the wardens, whom he places as next in authority to the justices, 'were variously described in official documents, and seldom expressly as wardens; but 'the word may conveniently be used to avoid ambiguity.' A desire to avoid ambiguity sometimes tends to false impressions, and as the warden was the person who had the custody of a single forest it is not clear why he could not have also been the local deputy of the head forester. Sometimes in documents he was called steward or bailiff or chief forester; sometimes he was appointed for life, sometimes his office was hereditary, but whatever his title he was the local as distinguished from the general ministerial representative of the king. Their position often made these men tyrannical to the last degree, and nothing could make the laws of the forests and their administration more hateful to the general body of the English people—for there was scarcely a district where they had not some jurisdiction—than the misdeeds of these officials. In the *Rutland Eyre* of 1269 a long description is given of the wrongdoings of Peter de Neville, who seems to have been one of the worst behaved of these men:—

'The same Peter imputed to Master William de Martinvast that he was an evil doer with respect to the venison of the lord king in his bailiwick (balliva), and he imprisoned him at Allextun on two occasions, and afterwards he delivered him for a fine of one hundred shillings which he received from him; for which let him answer to the lord king, and to judgement with him because he delivered the aforesaid Master William without any warrant. . . .

'The same Peter charged Henry Gerard with a certain trespass to the forest, and took his beasts and detained them until he had paid him half a mark for their delivery and five shillings for their custody.' (P. 49.)

In fact, the said Peter de Neville acted dishonestly by his lord and unjustly to his neighbours, and the long tale of his many crimes gives a complete picture of individual forestal tyranny. He had his herd of three hundred pigs digging in the enclosure of the king, and he took money and kind from those who dwelt about him, and actually made a gaol at Allextun, in Leicestershire, which, says the roll in question, 'is full of water at the bottom, and in which he 'imprisoned many men whom he took, lawfully and unlawfully, by reason of his bailiwick in the county of Rutland,

‘and he delivered many of them at his pleasure and without ‘warrant.’ Such were the evil doings of Peter de Neville—*capitalis forestarius Foreste comitatus Roteland*—at the end of the reign of Henry III.

The active work of the forest was entrusted to men who safeguarded the venison and the vert, the deer and the greenwood, the timber and the underwood, who prevented poaching and watched for encroachments on the dominion of the king, and collected dues—the foresters, the verderers, and the agisters.

There were riding foresters and walking foresters, and pages, all appointed and paid by the warden, the custodian of the forest, if they were remunerated at all, but more often than not they actually paid the custodian of the forest for their place. The result was the existence of another rapacious class, making their living from their poorer and less powerful neighbours, accentuating what, in the Middle Ages, was the extremest social grievance of the people. Of it there is a picture, the truth of which is undoubted, in the grievances against the Charter of the Forest, formulated by the men of Somerset:—

‘3. Although the charter says that view of the lawing of dogs ought to be made every third year when the regard is made, and then by view of loyal men and good, and not otherwise, yet the foresters come through the towns blowing horns and making a nuisance with much noise to cause the mastiffs to come out to bark at them; and so they attach the good folk every year for their mastiffs if the three toes be not cut and a little piece from the ball of the right foot, although the charter says that the three toes are to be cut but not the ball of the fore foot.

‘4. Although the charter says that by view and by oath of twelve regarders, when they make their regard, as many foresters are to be set to guard the forest as to them shall seem reasonably sufficient, yet the chief forester sets foresters beneath him, riding and walking, at his pleasure without the view of anybody, and more than are sufficient to guard the lawful forest, in return for their giving as much as they can to make fine for having their bailiwicks, to the great damage and grievance of the country because of the surcharge of them and their horses and their pages, although the king has no profit and no demesne, except one wood which is called Brucombe in Selwood; and he takes there for herbage of that wood from the neighbouring towns sometimes two shillings, sometimes three shillings, or sometimes four shillings, although no money ought to be taken for herbage according to the charter.

‘5. Although the charter says that no forester or beadle shall make scotale, or collect sheaves, or oats, or other corn, or lambs, or little pigs, or shall make any other collection, yet the foresters come with

horses at harvest time and collect every kind of corn in sheaves within the bounds of the forest and outside near the forest, and then they make their ale from that collection, and those who do not come there to drink, and do not give money at their will are sorely punished at their pleas for dead wood, although the king has no demesne; nor does anyone dare to brew when the foresters brew, nor to sell ale so long as the foresters have any kind of ale to sell; and this every forester does year by year to the great grievance of the country.

'6. And besides this they collect lambs and little pigs, wool, and flax, from every house where there is wool a fleece, and in fence month from every house a penny, or for each pig a farthing. And when they brew they fell trees for their fuel in the woods of the good people without leave, to wit, oaks, maples, hazels, thorns, felling the best first, whereby the good people feel themselves aggrieved on account of the destruction of their woods; nor does any free man dare to attach any evil doer in his demesne wood, unless it be by a sworn forester. After harvest the riding foresters come and collect corn by the bushel, sometimes two bushels, sometimes three bushels, sometimes four bushels, according to the people's means; and in the same way they make their ale, as do the walking foresters, to the great grievance of the country.' (P. 126.)

The zealous forester was no respecter of persons, and his duty brought him sometimes into conflict with the Church or with noblemen. There is a quaint tale in the *Huntingdon Eyre* of how the suspicion of the foresters fell on one Gervais, of Dene, who was seized by them and placed in Huntingdon gaol. Presently there came to the foresters several chaplains of Huntingdon, and the bailiff of the Bishop of Lincoln, with book and candle, intending to excommunicate them, and they also demanded the prisoner, as a servant of the bishop, but the foresters, in this dilemma, declared that once the man was imprisoned they had no power to release him. Still, they all went to the prison, and took off the man's cap, and 'he had the crown of his head freshly shaven, whence the foresters suspected that 'it was shaved that day in prison. And the said Gervais 'went to his harness, and took it and went home,' and so the Church prevailed. But in this simple narrative we see abundant elements of strife, of sharp conflicts between delegated royal power and delegated ecclesiastical power, of the subjects which engaged the minds of men in rural England in those far-off days when the great cathedrals were rising over the land, and two forces—for the instance given is but one of many—were constantly in collision.

Besides the king's foresters there was a co-operative official, the woodward, appointed by the owner of land within the bounds of the forest, who, while he safeguarded

his master's interests, had also to be a gamekeeper for the king—a private forester sworn to protect the king's rights. The ranger we may pass over; his duties are obscure, and it was only when the forest system was in process of dissolution that he came into notice. Probably the word was intended to denominate some particular individual, and not a class.

The verderer was in many respects the most important official of the forest, since it was his business to keep watch and ward over the timber; he was responsible to the king and not to the wardens, and he was appointed by the county court, the elections being made upon receipt by the sheriff of the writ *de viridario eligendo*. The position, as can be well understood, for the verderer was the direct link between the royal exchequer and a great body of taxpayers, was one of responsibility, and was usually filled by knights or landed proprietors, while the numbers allotted to the forest varied according to its size and importance. 'The chief work,' says the editor of the 'Select Pleas,' 'in which the verderers were engaged was that of attending the forest courts.' This description hardly does justice to the importance of these officials: it might be supposed that they were merely spectators; but the verderer attended at the forest assemblies to report and to justify his conduct in his office. In the Nottinghamshire Eyre of 1334 there are some suggestive entries in regard to verderers:—

'Of the same verderers,' runs the roll, 'because they did not produce the rolls of the attachments of Linby, Bulwell, Calverton and Edwinstowe for the same year; in mercy, ten shillings. . . . Of the verderers of the eighteenth year of the same king for the price of the vert of the attachments of Bulwell, &c. . . . seventy-two shillings and ninepence.' (P. 68.)

In the same roll we find numerous entries such as this: 'Of Ralph the son of Reynold of Edwinstowe for an oak of the price of tenpence wherewith the verderers are charged 'in the roll of the price of the vert'; and in the Nottinghamshire Eyre of 1287 it is told how William de Vesey and his fellow justices in eyre in 1286 found that in the forest of Sherwood the king had sustained losses of many kinds, and so they provide that all the verderers of Sherwood are to assemble every forty days 'to hold, as is contained in the Charter of the forest, attachments both concerning the vert and the venison.' The functions, indeed, both of verderers and foresters, appear by no means always to be distinct. Thus in the same document the justices

direct that if anyone fells a green oak to the ground he is to be bound over to come to the next attachment, and his mainour is forthwith to be appraised by the foresters and verderers, and he is to pay the price to the 'verderers in 'full attachment.' It is therefore by no means surprising that as time went on, the forest officials became somewhat confused, both in nomenclature and in duties, which varied according to local needs and local habits.

Three important sources of forestal revenue were from assarts, purprestures, and wastes—in other words, from payments in respect of acts which became more necessary and more numerous every year. To uproot the trees and reduce a piece of wilderness to cultivation, to sow it with wheat and oats, was an offence against the forest laws if such space was within the bounds of a forest. It became an assart, and for the original trespass a fine had in any case to be paid, as well as for each succeeding crop, and as the justices in eyre came round the forests the tenants who were under this obligation brought to them what were in fact rents. But a mere payment did not always suffice, and the labour of reclamation might be destroyed. Roger de la Holve, says a roll, assarted a piece of land of certain dimensions, and he enclosed it with a ditch and a low hedge; therefore he is in mercy. Let the land be taken, the hedge and ditch removed. To the destruction of industry was oftentimes added the punishment of a fine. Sometimes a man within the bounds of the forest would enlarge an enclosure, even though the land appropriated was not part of the king's demesne, or he would make a fishpond, or build a mill. William de Berdeley without warrant enlarged his enclosure at Barndeleye by ten perches in length and ten feet in depth, and he enclosed it by a little ditch and a low hedge, so he was in mercy and the enclosure demolished. This was a purpresture, and, like the assart, the king generally derived from it a more or less continuous revenue. In the same way, if a tenant desired to protect his arable land against wandering deer, and enclosed it with a fence, this again was a purpresture. Richard Carettarius, the carter, who lived near Evesham, made a hedge and ditch around his field. 'Clausum prosteratur' concludes the roll. Robert de Mep occupied half an acre of land, and he guarded it with a hedge and a ditch without the leave of the king, and he died, and Alice his wife held the land after her husband, and again we read the suggestive and despotic words 'Terra 'capiatur, clausum prosteratur.' Tenants of woods within

the forest had a right to cut wood for fuel and for the repair of their property, the extent and manner of the right varying according to custom in different localities, but any infringement of it, however vague might be the original right, was an offence against the laws of the forest. It was waste, and for this the offender could be fined.

These three kinds of trespasses it was the business of the *regarders* to note. Twelve knights chosen for the purpose made the inspection, the *visitatio nemorum*, once in every three years. Their report, in the form of answers to certain questions, the Chapters of the Regard, was duly enrolled, and when the justices in eyre came round, among those who had to appear before them were the *regarders* with the regards.

The agister may perhaps be called the rent collector, who collected 'money for the agistment of cattle and pigs in the 'king's demesne, woods, and lawns,' receiving it after he had counted the beasts which had entered the forest.

But officials of the forest were only a part of the extended forestal system of mediæval England. There was a complete and elaborate series of what, for convenience, may be called courts. For the purpose of protecting the venison there were forest inquisitions, special inquiries into the death of a beast of the forest, held immediately after the finding of the animal, or into any presumed infringement of a forest law. To these the four neighbouring townships had to answer, common responsibility for the acts of the inhabitants resting on the whole district. An example will show the working of the practice, which is remarkable for the stubborn ignorance which was constantly shown by the commune; the popular interest was always adverse to that of the king. The first is from Essex :—

'On the Saturday next before the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin in the twenty-sixth year of the reign of Henry William Wayberd came into Horsfrith, and saw there Hawe le Scot and three others with him with bows and arrows; and he did not recognise them; and he left them and went to Roger of Wollaston the forester, and showed him how he found them. And he, taking his men with him, searched the aforesaid wood, and could find nothing. And upon this the foresters and verderers assembled, and made an inquisition thereof by four neighbouring townships, to wit: Fingrith, Abbess' Ing, Queen's Ing, and Writtle.

'Fingrith comes and says that it knows nothing of malefactors to the forest nor of persons harbouring them.

'Abbess' Ing says the same.

'Queen's Ing says the same.

'Writtle comes and says that it heard from William Wayberd that on the Friday next after the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin in the same year he saw two dogs running after a buck, which they worried to death, one being black, the other brindled, and he pointed this out to Roger of Wollaston the forester.' (P. 73.)

'In the thirty-second year of the reign of king Henry on Ash Wednesday, an inquisition concerning a fawn, which was found dead and wounded with an arrow in the wood of Brampton, was made by four townships, to wit, Brampton, Ellington, Grafham, and Dillington, which all say that they knew nothing thereof.

'In the same year on the Thursday next after the feast of Saints Tyburcius and Valerian an inquisition concerning a certain beast, which was taken in the meadow, and of which the entrails were found, was made at Weybridge by four townships, to wit, Alconbury, Woolley, Ellington, and Brampton, which all say that they know nothing thereof.' (P. 74.)

The desire for uniformity of description may very well incline us to consider the general inquisitions, or the swanimotes as they were sometimes called, as distinct from the special inquisitions, because they were held for the purpose of inquiring generally into trespasses against both the venison and the vert, and were held also at intervals. But they appear to be the natural outcome, for the purposes of convenience, of the special inquisition and of the attachment court—a court which, for its own particular purpose, may be regarded as answering to the special inquisition, since it was a court 'which, sitting at regular intervals, 'usually every sixth week, was chiefly concerned in trying 'cases of small trespasses to the vert.' These courts were also called swanimotes, a fact which again suggests that the special inquisition was the outcome of the attachment court. When the case was too serious to be decided by the general inquisition, the offender was bound over to appear before the justices in eyre; but the gravity of the act depends a great deal on locality, and even on the position of the offender. In the extracts from the Sherwood attachments there are many instances of the working of this portion of the forest laws. A man is fined eightpence 'pro uno stubbe'—for a pollarded tree—doubtless carrying some of it away for firewood; in another part of England and in another court a man is fined threepence 'pro una 'blestrone'—a sapling: whether he cut it down or whether he merely damaged it we cannot tell, but in most cases we surmise the injury was partial rather than complete.

These lesser courts, however, all led up to that which was supreme in the forest, the court of the justices in eyre—

itinerant justices appointed by the king's letters patent to hear and determine pleas of the forest in a particular county or group of counties, seven years, as in the case of pleas of the Crown and common pleas, being the normal period which elapsed between eyre and eyre. It was in many respects a court of supervision; it considered and if necessary punished foresters and verderers as well as those who had offended against the forest laws; it dealt with the more serious offences against the vert, as the inquisition did those which were of smaller moment; and it fined those wrongdoers who lay in prison awaiting its decision. According to the Charter of the Forest, if a man were seized and convicted of taking venison, he was to be heavily ransomed, and if he had no means of paying a fine, he was bound to be in prison for a year and a day, and if after that period had elapsed he could find pledges he was to be allowed to come out of prison, but if he could not, then he was to abjure the kingdom. But it seems that the question of ransom was a matter for the justices in eyre, and that on being first seized and convicted an offender must either remain in prison until the itinerant justices should arrive in the locality (unless, which often happened, he died), or find pledges for his future appearance. Of the general course of procedure we have a picture in one of the rolls of Surrey that is obviously a mere précis of proceedings, but its brevity enables the different steps to be followed clearly, though in reading it we must allow for spaces of time. 'It 'is presented and proved,' begins the roll, 'by the verderers 'and by twenty-four good and loyal men of the town of 'Guildford or of the parts adjacent to it, and by many sworn 'townships

'that Robert King, Peter Long, William atte Hedge, who is dead, Ralph atte Slough, who likewise is dead, and John, the son of Henry atte Down, who were workmen in the park aforesaid repairing the paling of the same park, felled several oaks for making palings thereof. And when the deer of the lord king came to browse on the little branches of the aforesaid oaks, they stretched snares for taking them. And on the morrow of All Saints in the forty-fourth year, Bartholomew the parker came up and found the aforesaid evil doers with the aforesaid snares stretched: and he took them and delivered them to William la Zouche who was then sheriff of Surrey for imprisonment. And afterwards by the order of Thomas of Greasley, then the justice of the forest, they were delivered on bail until the next pleas of the forest. The aforesaid William and Ralph, who are dead, were essoined the first day of death; therefore their pledges are quit. And the aforesaid Robert, Peter, and John came, and being convicted of this are detained

in prison. Afterwards the aforesaid John atte Down, being brought out of prison, made fine by half a mark by the pledge of John of Garkem . . . and William, the son of Clement of Worplesdon. Afterwards came Robert le King, and, being brought out of prison, made fine by half a mark by the pledge of Robert of the park and William of Apicroft. And the aforesaid Peter, being brought out of prison, made fine by half a mark by the pledge of Richard of Aldbourne and Andrew atte Hook.' (P. 55.)

As we have seen in describing the regards, one duty of these officers was to bring their reports before the justices in eyre for them to take action. In the Huntingdon Eyre there has been bequeathed to us a little tale of a purpresture and its consequences, which in its simple narrative is more instructive than pages of comment:—

'It was ordered by Robert Passelewe and his fellow-justices last in eyre here for pleas of the forest that the houses of Vincent of Stanley which had been raised to the nuisance of the forest should be pulled down; and the doing of this was hindered by certain persons, Colin of Merton and Richard of Toseland, the bailiffs of Philip of Stanton the sheriff of Huntingdon. And the verderers witness that when they and the foresters came to pull down the said houses, as they were ordered, the said Colin and Richard of Toseland prohibited them from pulling them down. And when the foresters laid their hands on the said houses to unroof and pull them down, the said Colin and Richard forcibly drove them back, saying that they would not in any way allow them to pull them down, because they had the precept to that effect of Philip of Stanton, who was then the sheriff of Huntingdon. And the verderers and foresters went to the same sheriff, and told him the nature of their precept concerning the houses to be pulled down, and how they were hindered by his bailiffs aforesaid by his precept. And the said sheriff said that they had no order thereof from him, and disavowed their deed entirely; whereby the order of the justices and what was for the king's advantage concerning the aforesaid houses to be pulled down remains undone. And therefore the sheriff is ordered that he cause the said Colin and Richard to come from day to day. Afterwards Richard came; and he could not deny that he impeded the said foresters and verderers as is aforesaid, and this without warrant; therefore he is in mercy.' (P. 18.)

The names of many of these courts and officials are familiar to educated persons; twenty years ago, when public rights over the remnants of English forests were in dispute, they were often on men's lips. But they had become mere fragments of a great system, little more than dead relics of a very living past—a past which was most perfect and complete in these respects after the passing of the Charter of the Forest. Of the system as it existed in that age, with its officers and its courts, of its connection with

the habits of all classes of the people, a sketch has just been given.

But as the Charter of the Forest forms the conclusion of the period of unlicensed forestal dominion, so it commences the period of the inevitable decay of a system which was antagonistic to the beneficent growth of national civilisation.

The immediate effect of the charter was to cause great disturbance to forest administration, since in order to carry out its provisions perambulations of the bounds were necessary to ascertain with accuracy the forests which ought to remain under the dominion of the king. The perambulations themselves and the awards, as they may be called, which were a consequence of them, as might be expected, in the case of districts the boundaries of which were so uncertain, were satisfactory neither to the people nor to the sovereign, and on February 11, 1225, the charter was again issued, '*spontanea et bonâ voluntate nostrâ*,' but in return for this favour a grant of a fifteenth of all movables was obtained from the nobles. The moment, however, that Henry came of age he challenged some of the disafforestments made during his legal infancy, drawing no distinction between rich and poor, layman and ecclesiastic, as when the Abbot of Abingdon was ordered to produce the charters of the king's predecessors under which he claimed liberties in the forest and the disafforested districts. Throughout Henry's reign and that of his son the same effort on the part of the sovereign to retain his forests under a cloak of legality continued, for the charter was constantly confirmed. But as such confirmation did not settle local disputes, or define boundaries, it did not prevent the king from asserting his existing rights sometimes by the silent but effective method of preventing or not directing perambulations and inquiries.

On the other hand the people had no scruple about making use of the same vagueness of bounds to diminish the property of the king. 'In most forests,' the editor is now referring to the end of the reign of Edward I., 'the jurors paid no attention to the boundaries made at the beginning of the reign of Henry III. They put out of the forest vast tracts of land which had been forest for a century and a half, alleging that they had been afforested by Henry II., or his sons Richard and John, and disregarding the distinction between districts which had been afforested for the first time, and those which had been reafforested as ancient forests by Henry II.' Such a conflict was inevit-

able, and that it should be conducted under the semblance of legality by each side was just as natural, but it could have only one result—the gradual diminution of the royal forests under the influence of an advancing civilisation with which a system of forest law such as we have described was absolutely incompatible and impossible.

The striking feature of the forest laws was the manner in which they harassed every class of the community in the rural districts. It was not their harshness which offended the people. That there were cruelties in their administration before the Charter of the Forest is undoubted, but it was a cruel age, and life was held cheap. In their zenith—as we have already said—they were not cruel laws, and they were not generally harshly administered, for the higher officials were often themselves men of position in a locality, and in sympathy with some at any rate of its inhabitants; to brand them with severe epithets is to be ignorant of facts. Their real sting lay in the way in which a dweller in the country was met by them at every turn—even the smaller towns were not free from the intrusion of the forester, and the traveller peacefully passing through a forest district might be arrested on suspicion. That the forests needed guardianship and regulation was undoubted, for they were at once the depôt, not only for fuel, but for timber for every purpose, for the building of ships and the erection of houses. It was not on this account that the forest laws and officials were disliked; it was because of the multitude of offences which they caused against the rules of the forest, because of the intrusions into the daily life of the humblest peasants, which became more vexatious the more that the population of rural England increased in numbers.

It is impossible in a limited space to give more than a sketch of the elaborate forestal system of mediæval England, with its law-courts and its officials, at the time when it was strongest and most clearly defined, or to do more than to suggest its effects on the domestic politics and the society of the age. But the longer it is considered, the more important it appears. It was at once a valuable source of revenue, as well as a striking and significant result of the feudal system, tending to fortify in the minds of the sovereigns of England the idea of divine right, and it interfered with two of the chief necessities of life among the rural population—their food and their firing. It placed the sovereign and his servants in constant antagonism to all classes of the community, whether lay or ecclesiastic,

whether they lived in a castle or a cottage, in county towns or villages, which lay near the margins of his forest, and it was a continual barrier to the extension of agriculture, and so of civilisation. It emphasises the character of individual right to property in land in mediæval England as distinguished from the right of the commune which prevailed in some parts of Europe—for the king was the chief landowner in the country, and when he parted with his right over a forest it devolved, not on a body of the people, but on a nobleman only less powerful than himself; and it demolishes altogether the idea which yet sometimes is evident in political discussion on modern land tenure—a theory so completely at variance with historical truth—of the inherent right of every individual to a portion of the land of the kingdom. In a word, from the time of the Conqueror to the nineteenth century, the royal forests have been the cause of a conflict between two opposing systems of land tenure. The right of the individual and the corporate right of the community to the forests have been in constant antagonism, the right of the individual prevailing everywhere; for in the places where others than the king and his grantees have obtained rights in the forest by virtue of custom, it has been as individuals, and not as members of a community which was capable of enjoying rights of property. The only form in which the village or the township was recognised by the forest laws as having a corporate existence was in the unpleasant form of a liability of a township for offences committed by individual inhabitants against the forestal law. Nor have the effects of the forest laws yet wholly disappeared from the social life of England, for they have left a legacy in the game laws, which have done more than any other part of the English polity to estrange classes in the rural districts, and have ruined the lives of many a peasant. On the other hand, they have provided for our teeming population tracts of land which under other conditions might long ago have been the property of private owners—fields, it is true, of corn, or the grazing ground of cattle—but closed to the healthy enjoyment of the people.

ART. IX.—*Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology.*
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A SELECTION of letters, now being published by the Biblical Archæological Society, presents features of more general historic interest than the majority of texts that have of late come to Europe from Assyria and Babylonia. The number of such tablets inscribed in cuneiform characters is very large. From the town of Nippur alone no fewer than 30,000 were brought by the American expeditions between 1888 and 1896, to say nothing of thousands from Babylon itself, and elsewhere within Mesopotamia. But when these have, with infinite trouble, been deciphered by specialists, they often turn out to be merely the correspondence of some firm of bankers or usurers, or to present lists of gods, and temples, and forms recording routine transactions during the later Babylonian or Persian periods. Valuable as these are to the specialist, they often ill repay the trouble that has to be taken in ascertaining their meaning, as compared with the rarer instances in which chronicles or the political correspondence of an early monarch are recovered. The letters now under consideration are of the latter class, and throw an interesting light on the condition of the west of Asia during the seventh century B.C. They have been translated into French by the Rev. A. J. Delattre, S.J., one of several Jesuit fathers who are active in this branch of study, and the general sense is beyond dispute, though some minor corrections appear necessary when sufficient attention has not been paid to the niceties of Assyrian grammar.

It was a very strong dynasty that raised Assyria to the position of mistress of the civilised world, in Asia and Egypt, between 722 and 626 B.C. It began with Sargon, who captured Samaria and took Israel captive. His conquests included Philistia, where he took Ashdod in 711 B.C. His other wars were waged in Arabia, Armenia, Media, Babylonia, and Elam as far as Shushan, while on the north-west he overran Asia Minor, occupying Cappadocia and Cilicia, and setting up a record of victory at Idalion, in Cyprus. Seven Ionian kings are said to have submitted, and Merodach Baladan, backed by all the power of Elam, was defeated. Sennacherib, son of Sargon, succeeded in 705 B.C., and maintained most of these conquests, though

he was unsuccessful against Egypt, and was defied by Hezekiah in Jerusalem. He also ravaged the country south of Edom, and drove out Merodach Baladan—the ally of Hezekiah—from Babylon. Esarhaddon, his son, was yet more successful, pushing on the north-east farther into Media than any former king, while on the south-west all the kings of Syria, Palestine, and Cyprus were tributary, including Manasseh of Judah. He invaded Egypt and took Memphis, while his son Assurbanipal—the last great Assyrian king—occupied Thebes. In the time of the latter Assyria seems to have reached the summit of prosperity, though signs of the sudden collapse that followed were not wanting during this reign; for, in his fourth year (664 B.C.) Gyges the Lydian revolted, and Egypt threw off the Assyrian yoke for ever, while in 649 B.C. a dangerous revolt in Babylon was headed by Samassumukin, younger brother of Assurbanipal. It was met with vigour and wise policy, and the rebel leader perished in the flames of his palace. Twelve years of war with Elam, or Western Persia, followed, for the Elamites had aided the rebellion, which was also assisted by the Arabs and Egyptians. Elam was at last conquered, and Shushan destroyed, while the Arabs were defeated near Damascus, and pursued through Moab to the lands of the Nabatheans and to the ‘tents of Kedar.’ But during the later years of Assurbanipal occurred that terrible raid of Scythian hordes which laid waste all Western Asia and exhausted the power of Assyria, leading to the capture of Nineveh by the Medes after two short reigns, and finally to the triumph of the Persians after seventy years of Babylonian supremacy.

Assurbanipal is the Sardanapalus of the Greeks, whose name has become a byword for effeminate luxury. This seems, however, to be scant justice to the character of this monarch, and we do not know that he perished in the flames of his palace, as represented by Greek authors. More probably they confounded him with his rebellious brother in Babylon. During his reign of more than forty years art, commerce, and literature flourished. In his palace were stored all manner of tablets relating to mathematics and astronomy, with lists of countries, animals, and plants. He caused the ancient non-Semitic records of the extreme past to be copied and translated, and dictionaries even were prepared for the purpose. His palace walls were covered with some of the finest examples of Assyrian historical sculpture. A wide trade and a minutely organised system of government knit together the various provinces of the Empire.

Nor did the supposed effeminate Sardanapalus fail to show both courage and prudence in the management of affairs during the great rebellion, as the new letters abundantly testify. Some of these may belong to earlier reigns, and one at least is later than his time; but the historical allusions in other cases show that the letter was written during the time of Assurbanipal.

As regards the personal character of this great king, two of the letters deserve special attention. The first is written to a faithful friend, whom Ummanigas, King of Elam, had tried to get disgraced and executed. It runs as follows:

'King's message to Sintabniakhu. I am well. Is it well with you? As to Sinsarusur whom you sent. Anyone who speaks shameful things to slander you, for me to hear, has turned away his heart from the Sun God. But Ummanigas your accuser spoke before me, and delivered you up to be slain. But Assur my god required this of me, and they instructed him thus: "My servant, and the support of my house, I will not slay." Was it not at heart that he might thereby behold the ruin of thy Lord's house? For this Ummanigas plotted your being slain. But it is remembered that I have known your faithfulness, and have given you no promotion. For these two years have you not endured the enemy, and famine, for the house of your Lord? Who shall say anything against a servant who supports the house of his Lord, and I overlook it? And as for the trouble which you and the Assyrians your brothers have taken—as you sent to say—what you do is prudent. I perceive that you guard my fortress. . . . And your reputation in my sight is good, and the benefits that I shall extend to you will be an endowment for children's children.'

The second remarkable letter is addressed to the foreigners who took part in the Babylonian revolt:

'King's order to the non-Babylonians. I am well. It is a simple saying among men, "When the potter's dog got among the pots, the potter made him howl at will." So too you, for there is no difference. You accuse the Babylonians of evil, and, false or not false, you fix on my servants what you and your Lord do. It is a simple saying, "In vain they drag a sinful woman to the door of the judge's house, if her husband is judge." The letter, and the reply returned to you, I send you sealed: it being known that you say thus, "What will he answer us?" Some of the Babylonians, my servants and friends, sent word to me: so I was convinced (and) satisfied. Truly it is well that the wicked should impute sin.'

This sarcastic reply to his enemies—who, it is to be noted, are not saluted with inquiries as to their welfare—reminds us of a famous parable in the Old Testament,* by its use of

* 2 Kings xiv. 9.

familiar proverbs. The vigour and directness of both letters suggest that they were dictated by the king himself; and, taken in conjunction with others, they seem to indicate a simplicity, due to greatness of character, which appeals in a peculiar degree to orientals, and which, in later ages, made Saladin so much beloved by his subjects. The tiresome formulæ and the stilted language of letters and inscriptions written by ordinary court scribes and historians are absent in the present correspondence as a rule; and the writers proceed to business almost at once, and give their information in the shortest possible form.

Reports to the king came from all quarters of the empire, and the centralisation of government must have kept him very fully employed. Two are from Syria, the first purely a routine letter:

‘To the King my Lord your servant Ukhat. Peace be to the King our Lord. The fortress is quite safe. There is peace in all the outlands of the land of Hamath. The heart of the King my Lord may be easy. Nothing is heard (unfavourable to) the house of the King my Lord. There is much peace.’

In the second Syrian letter we find reference, perhaps, to the settlement of this region after the Arab war, which had disturbed some, at least, of the Syrian towns. The city of Semyra is mentioned, being an important fortress at the mouth of the Eleutherus, north of Tripoli; while Merash, noticed with it, was a Hittite city on the south slope of the Taurus chain.

‘To the King my Lord your servant Kisir-Marduk. Peace be to the King my Lord. About the houses of those implicated in disturbances the King my Lord sent to me thus: “You asked me for these fitted up houses: you ought not to give them to your servants.” It seems that they say what is not just about me in presence of the King my Lord. Let a head-man of the King my Lord be sent, to tell me what is proper, from the King my Lord. Let him see if these houses of those implicated in disturbances are houses fitted up. Let him be sent to the King my Lord, and make his report: let the King my Lord consider what is imputed against me. This came, “You speak not rightly about my property.” About the houses of the servants of Sipi-Assur, what the King my Lord sent to me came thus, “You take possession of their houses, giving them to your servants.” When Sipi-Assur sent his servants to me, at Semyra, he sent his property. I transferred their houses: to the people of Merash I gave them. Sipi-Assur having submitted, let the overseers make houses for his servants in Dur-Sargon’

(that is to say, in Khorsabad, north-east of Nineveh).

In this case the usual policy of transferring disaffected

persons, and of redistributing the population of the foreign provinces, appears to be recommended.

Other letters refer to affairs in Assyria itself. One of these runs :

‘Peace be to the King my Lord : the soldiers, the city Calah, the ladies of the palace, and all that is in Dur-Sargon, is safe.’

But another notices a riot in the same place, and is addressed to the king, informing him :

‘From Iskia I marched myself to Dur-Sargon : they told me this, “They rioted on the 7th of Adar : in Dur-Sargon they fought each other.” If the King my Lord asks is there anything to deplore in any of the dwellings, the places are safe : the suburbs, the palaces (or temples), the fort, all the houses of the fortress, are safe. The heart of the King my Lord may be easy.’

From further north we have news connected with the conquest of Armenia, in a confidential letter from the king :

‘King’s order to Nebodurusur as follows : I am sending Mannuki-assur, the local Mudir, about the chief men of the people of Ararat : meanwhile he will send the secretly disaffected, who eat food in your presence, to the city of Urzukhin. You, as soon as you see this letter, will try to get the number of the secretly disaffected, and will send information.’

This very Napoleonic missive contains a title which, like that of Sultan, has come down to our own times from the days of the Assyrians, a provincial governor being still known as a Mudir.

The majority of the letters appear, however, to refer to the rebellion at Babylon and to the wars against Elam. The great city on the Euphrates was never very willingly subject to Nineveh, though Assurbanipal appears to have shown every desire to conciliate its inhabitants. It was a very ancient struggle, originally racial, between the two capitals, which was only settled finally by the fall of Nineveh, and which, during a history of fifteen centuries, had most important results on the fortunes of countries west of the Euphrates. Babylon was founded about 2250 B.C., and in 2109 B.C. its first great king, Ammurabi (or Amraphel, according to Sir Henry Rawlinson), shook off the yoke of Elam, and became supreme in the West. He and his descendants were Kassites, speaking a Mongol language, in which their chronicles and inscriptions are preserved, but ruling a mixed population, partly Semitic. They appear to have claimed suzerainty for two centuries to the borders of Egypt. The Assyrians were purely Semitic,

and make their appearance in history about 1850 B.C., when Ismi-Dagon seems to have ruled along the Tigris, and even in part of Chaldea. By this time a second and far less powerful dynasty of Kassites had succeeded in Babylon.

It has been supposed, in consequence of discoveries at Nippur and Susa,* that, although the Mongol origin of civilisation in Mesopotamia is beyond dispute, Semitic kings held power even beyond the Euphrates at a date much earlier than that of the foundation of Babylon. It is rather to be regretted that scholars seem to vie in attributing a more and more remote date for the origin of civilisation in Greece, Egypt, and Chaldea alike. The 'pre-Mycenæan,' the 'pre-dynastic,' and the 'pre-Sargonite' theories all rest on the most flimsy evidence. There is absolutely no proof that there were kings of Chaldea in 4500 B.C. History proper only begins with the foundation of Babylon, and the statements of Babylonians in the sixth century B.C. are suspicious, in view of the same tendency—found in all early as well as in modern writings—to pre-date the origin of empire. There was a king (or kings, for the name may have been as common as some others) called Naram Sin, who may have been Semitic, and whom the Babylonians believed to have lived about 3750 B.C., and to have ruled all Western Asia. But inscriptions with this name at Nippur, neither by position in the ruins nor by the character of the writing, can be shown to be very primitive, and Dr. Oppert considered them to be not much earlier than 2000 B.C. The oldest texts are Akkadian, or non-Semitic, in all cases, though it is certain that Semitic rulers existed in Elam before 1800 B.C., which fully agrees with the biblical state-

* The oldest non-Semitic (Akkadian) texts known are probably those from Nippur (Nos. 86-87), but the attribution is very uncertain, and the name *Lu-gal Zug-gi-si* very doubtful, while the date is quite unknown. The oldest Semitic text is now said to be one of 600 lines from Susa; but the name *Manistuba* on this monument is equally uncertain, and the date very doubtful. The oldest dated Semitic texts belong to the reign of Ammurabi in Babylon (about 2140-2094 B.C.), including forty letters from him to Siniddina, a Semitic ruler in Chaldea. The Semitic texts from Tell Loh and Nippur (Nos. 126-127) are probably of about this age. Those of Naram Sin (Nippur, Nos. 4 and 120) may be earlier; though No. 4 (a brick-stamp) reads, 'The God Naram Sin built the house of Bel,' and seems to belong to the later age when this king was deified. The most archaic texts are all Akkadian.

ment,* which some antiquaries have thought fit to consider incorrect.

The rise of an Assyrian kingdom and the conquests of the eighteenth Egyptian dynasty led to a balance of power in Asia which endured for four hundred years. On the collapse of Egypt, 'the great king of Assyria,' having allied himself by marriage with the Kassite ruler of Babylon, was able to conquer Syria; but soon after an internecine conflict between the Assyrians and Kassites began, and lasted for more than four centuries, with intervals of peace, during which boundaries were settled. In 1128 B.C., on the death of the great Semitic ruler, Nebuchadrezzar I., his kingdom being divided between two sons, the Kassites again became powerful in Babylon, till the Assyrian conquest of 1010 B.C.; but it was not until about 900 B.C. that the Assyrians, being united with Babylon, appear to have been again free to subjugate the countries west of the Euphrates; and, as before mentioned, rebellion in Babylonia constantly crippled their power, down to the last days of Assurbanipal and his successors. It is the same story that we read in later ages, when a Seljuk, or a Saladin, left sons to divide the empire; for whenever a single master ruled in Mesopotamia he was able also to reach the Mediterranean, and whenever internal conflicts arose the shore lands of Syria either became independent or were annexed by Egypt. The letters which refer to Babylonian affairs are thus of peculiar interest; and it is a remarkable instance of false criticism that the captivity of King Manasseh used to be regarded as unhistorical because, during the period of Assyrian domination, he is said to have been taken to Babylon; † whereas it is in reality a proof that the Hebrew writer was well informed, since at this time the western capital was in possession of the Assyrian suzerain.

The employment of foreign mercenaries to guard the disaffected region of Babylon is shown in one letter; for the land of Yadai there mentioned, and the Kuai (perhaps the Koa of the Bible ‡), were a region and a tribe well known to have been situated north of Antioch, but that furnished troops for the protection of Borsippa. The transfer of Israel to the east was by no means an exceptional feature of Assyrian policy, but one that we trace as early as 1130 B.C., and which continued to be regarded as essential till the

* Gen. x. 22.

† 2 Chron. xxxiii. 11.

‡ Ezekiel xxiii. 23.

Persian conquest, when a more humane system was introduced, Darius I. not only tolerating the building of a temple by the restored Jews at Jerusalem, but equally allowing the rebuilding of Egyptian temples destroyed by the Assyrians. The letter in question runs thus :

'To the King my Lord your servant Marduk-sarakhisu, being appointed to guard the house of Nebosib in Borsippa. Peace be to the King my Lord. The heart of the King my Lord may be quite at ease. My fortress is safe—the place to which the King my Lord appointed me. Now I have sent to the King my Lord the men of Borsippa, who made these quarrels. They slew one another. We sent out from the fortress, to which the King my Lord appointed us, the Utai, the Kuai of Yadaï, and the Kuai of Rikhi, whom the King my Lord sent with me to our fortress. They kept watch with me. The heart of the King my Lord may rest. Let the King our Lord accept this : let (him) be easy about it.'

The royal proclamation to the Babylonians at the time when Samassumukin revolted from his brother Assurbanipal, with other letters, fully indicates the conciliatory policy of the king to all who were of the Semitic race, as contrasted with his treatment of their Elamite allies, whose kings bore non-Semitic names.

'King's order to the Babylonians. I am well : is it well with you ? All the rebel talk that my no-brother spoke to you they have told me. I heard them. Not a rebel revolts to him in Assyria. I call Marduk my God * to witness as to the words of this his request (whoever may have spoken against me) that what I seek with my heart my mouth spoke. His expectation is vain. He bethought him that the name of the Babylonians his friends would be abhorred by me. But I listened not. Your brotherhood with the sons of Assyria assures your protection. God is my witness that the fault is his. You are with me at heart. This news of revolt for him you will not listen to. Your name, which is good before me and before all lands, you will not shame ; and you will not make yourselves sinners before God ; and that he has hindered the law among you that you seek, I know. So behold, him we have caused to be proclaimed a rebel to our rule. The Government is not his. So we have annulled the name ; and him, with the author of the slanders, ye shall expel. His, as he has established dominion over yourselves and caused sin, I know is the fault before God. Now I send to you, that with these devices of his you should not soil yourselves sinfully, against my instructions. Behold the right of which I am assured by Bel will not be taken from my hands by one whom Marduk casts down. Twenty-third of Iyar, in the eponymy of Assurdurusur, to be brought by Samasbalatsuikbi.'

* *Elohim*, a plural noun often used with the verb in the singular, as in Hebrew.

In the revolution that followed, the town of Nippur, south-east of Babylon, appears to have remained loyal to Assyria; but an unfortunate mistake made as to a deputation had to be set right by the king himself as follows:

'(King's message) to the men of Nippur. I am well: is it well with you? As to Hannana, Rimut, and Malkiya the overseer, whom you sent to me. It is well that you have taken these persons. See that you do not weary to guard them. And as to your sending to me thus: "Fifteen of us elders sent to enquire as to health . . . (were not) brought in to the King's (presence). . . ." It is a great error on the part of the official who directed you, that I gave orders for (expulsion?), and of no one else, that the man in front of the palace did not admit you there, to my presence within. I call Assur my God to witness if I had known that you requested to enter my presence; but I myself knew nothing of your request. Whether it was this man or that man it was well, for all of you are as one before me.'

The Babylonians, however, appear to have put pressure on these Nippur loyalists by a kind of 'boycott,' which was very effective, since it consisted in cutting off the water supply, as will be seen below:

'To the King my Lord thy servant, the chief of this Province. May Bel, Marduk, and Nebo protect the King my Lord. The King knows that whether much (supported?) or not (supported?), I adhere to the King's peace. Now I send Bilusatu my brother, with ten men well known sons of Nippur, to salute the King my Lord. The King knows that all the lands are estranged from Assyria; none of the lands submit to bear his yoke. Wherever we go we are reproached thus: "Why do you bear the yoke of the land of Assyria?" Now a way [literally door] is open for me, but we go not forth. We guard the King's fortress. The messenger, and many whom the King has sent to our brethren, have all beheld: let them tell the King. The King will not betray us into the hands of anyone. There is no spring water. We must not die of thirst. The King your father gave us water of the canal,* but the supply of the canal to Nippur is dry . . . water is not made full for us. Lo! let the King send to Ubar, the head-man of Babylon; let him give us a supply of canal water. The water rises with them. We must not fail from thirst unaided by the King, lest all the lands say thus: "The people of Nippur, who took the yoke of the land of Assyria, they have subjected to tortures by thirst."'

The same Ubar reports that Babylon is pacified—perhaps somewhat later:

'To the King my Lord your servant Ubar, the head-man of Babylon. May Nebo and Marduk protect the King. Now this day may Marduk

* Literally, 'the river of constructions.'

and Zarpanit exalt the life of the soul of the King my Lord. The Babylonians have returned to Babylon: they trusted us; and lo! this very day they bless the King, saying that the punishment and spoiling of Babylon he has restrained; and from Sippara as far as the Salt river, the chiefs of Chaldea bless the King; because he has allowed Babylon to be inhabited all the lands (find shelter?) in the presence of the King my Lord.'

Another commissioner sent to Nippur, and as far south as Erech near the mouth of the Euphrates, appears to have preceded the arrival of the king himself. After the usual salutations Kaptia reports:

'About news of Babylon, as the King my Lord sends to me, "has not the King my Lord's seal reached you, which Assurramimsar brought for me?" As I and my brethren were sent with him, to the fortress of the land of Arasu to keep guard, we knew that news of Babylon would not arrive on the road, before the palace official went up. So he found me in Nippur and Erech from your majesty at home, and I received news of the King my Lord; and I myself have not been (deprived?) of news of the King my Lord, for I (said) thus to the people, their sons, and their wives, till his majesty is among them, "Let news of the King my Lord come"; and as I myself send elders, with messages for the King my Lord at home, I shall cause news for the King my Lord to come from Babylon.'

The region south of Babylon was, however, much disturbed by the wars with Elam, which are well known from the historical texts. Ummanigas, king of Elam, having been murdered, his brother Tammарit fled to Assyria, and though restored by Assyrian policy was unable to maintain power, and the usurper Ummanaldas was finally attacked by Assurbanipal, and taken in Susa (Shushan), where the temples were found full of presents and spoils from Babylon, taken by former kings of Elam, and sent by the rebel brother Samassumukin. The following letters appear to belong to the period of these wars, and refer to the subsequent settlement of Chaldea.

Kudur, an official in the South, invokes the blessings of the gods of Erech on the king, and continues:

'Bel and Nebo, Istar of Erech, and Nana, shall make strong, and let them prosper, Upuku (whom the King my Lord sends) from the rising to the setting of the sun. Let them grant to the King my Lord that the kings of all lands may be swept before the weapons of the King my Lord . . . to the land of Sumir they are (sending?) Musizib Marduk, sister's son of Belibni, whom Belibni sent two or three times with messages, to the presence of the King my Lord. Belibni appointed him in spite of me. The man in charge of the gates spoke to me of him. These people are not among the friends of my Lord's house. It is not well that they should come into the interior. They

fill the ears of the land of Elam with news from the land of the King my Lord, and when there was famine in the land of Elam they brought in food within it. I send to tell the King my Lord. The King my Lord will do as he thinks fit.'

This hint seems to have been taken, for the king writes to Belibni about his nephew, who probably belonged to the party of the rebellious Samassamukin:

'King's order to Belibni. I am well: is it well with you? About Musizib Marduk. He did not come on his (appointed) day to my presence. I have sent after him. It is understood that he is not staying at Nineveh.'

Possibly the lost messenger, or spy, may have been put out of the way. The Assyrians, on the other hand, got information from deserters as to what was going on in Elam, and one letter contains a passage to that effect:

'An outcast, and several persons of the Kalki people, have come down to me from a palace official. The brothers of the King of Elam pressed their brother, urging him thus: "We will assemble an expedition: we will go to the people of Kalki: we will pluck the people of Kalki out of the hand of the land of Assyria." The King of Elam gave no direction: he heard them not: he ignored, saying, "Just now I shall not lay waste."'

The subsequent settlement of a village in the vicinity of the Persian Gulf, which had been ruined by the invaders, is noticed in the two following letters, which give further evidence of a desire to pacify Babylonia. The same official, Kudur, who gave information as to the supposed spy is mentioned again:

'To the King of lands my Lord, your servant Kudur. May Bel and Nebo pronounce safety of life, and length of days, ever for the King my Lord. Since I have been in the land of the enemy, as a commander in the neighbourhood of Beth Amukkanna, the servants of the King my Lord have been smitten: the storehouses of the forts of the King my Lord have been seized: therefore let them send the light troops of the King my Lord. They are coming against the magazines, they have slain the people, and ravished the women; and they come in against Zabaya the local Mudir.

'On the day that they entered Beth Amukkanna they told us thus: "They are come against the local Mudir." I sent soldiers (saying) thus: "March! go up! drive forth! guard the fort! catch the people." From the King's river towards Nebosarusur, the principal official of the canton, they went: so he seized them. The King my Lord, if he thinks fit, can ask about these things. The King my Lord knows how Beth Amukkanna is destroyed. I was the commander in these regions. They did not cause light troops to accompany me. And these persons were aggressors, but it is our fault that

this region is destroyed. Let the King my Lord say that they may send with speed light troops, to march to the storehouses where I abode.'

The complaint seems thus to be against a guerilla style of warfare, and that no light (literally 'swift') troops were available: which accounted for the disaster.

'To the King of Kings my Lord thy servant Nebousallim. May Assur, Samas, and Marduk seek the peace of the King my Lord. These people in the reedy swamps, the fen-people all of them, since in the time of Samasubni their chief, being a man of possession, they had a portion there, let them be settled in Beth Amukkanna. Is it not the land of their brethren before? They are not hostile to me. Those who are outcasts will be against me: these will help me. As a reward to Kudur of Beth Amukkanna from the King my Lord, let the King send word; let a letter be asked from the house of the King my Lord, to direct that I may now settle whoever I took captive in Beth Amukkanna. Their brethren do not grudge them this: they will not trouble the King my Lord.'

Another instance of royal clemency is found in another set of three letters, from a certain Rammansumusur, who appears to have been in disgrace. These are couched in a tone of great humility, and two are of considerable length. The first is a petition, beginning with an elaborate panegyric of the king, as favourite of the gods and patron of temples, whereby good rains, river water, cheap prices, and days of continual feasting and joy are secured. 'Those,' he says, 'who for many years have been captive you have set free; those long sick are healed; and the squalid clothed with robes of honour.' Yet he and his son remain unhappy; for among the many who enjoy benefits from the king, 'Our bosoms are hollow, we are low at heart,' although 'those condemned to death for their sin have been made to live by the King my Lord.' He continues to ask that his son be allowed to go out once more in the presence of the king, and 'may we leap for joy among all these people, and bless the King.' 'My eyes rest on the King,' he adds, for 'among all the people no one will be happier than I should he draw me forth who am a hostage among them.'

This request was apparently granted, and a very effusive letter of gratitude followed. After invoking fifteen gods to protect the king, Rammansumusur continues:

'May they grant happiness and health, length of days, children enough, and good omens to the King my Lord. May they cause fame and family, and that offspring be borne to the King my Lord. May thy root rejoice and spread; for that the King my Lord sent to me

thus: "To-day thy heart may be at ease." He had sealed his mouth, he delayed, he has not regarded, (but) I waited, I fortified my breast, I stilled my heart that the King my Lord might do for me, by these good words, these noble deeds; that he might reward me before God and man; for as a father does to his son the King my Lord does to his servant. He has taken away the reproach from the house of my kindred. What other king has been gracious to his servants as mine to me; or benefactor as my benefactor has done good to me? For this mercy may all gods of heaven and earth do good, a thousand times as much, to the King my Lord, while heaven and earth endure, for the good words, the noble deeds, that the King my Lord has rendered to me, hearing and beholding which my heart, at ease in me, renewed its life. I gave command that they should bring oxen before me to sacrifice. Since among the generations of the King my Lord, the King my Lord lets me grow grey, and this through the King my Lord having raised me up from death, it should ensue that he be not fated to die; may he establish first all those who lift up their eyes to me; may the King my Lord do for my sons what (he has done) for me: may the King my Lord outlive their sons' sons. For the King my Lord has sent to me thus, "You, your nephews, your father's brothers' sons, I have chosen to bring forth to my presence." For this mercy may Assur, in the day that he calls by name, may Bel and Nebo when they call by name, may all gods, when they call by name, preserve the name, the seed, the offspring named after the King my Lord. May they be chosen, may they be made to go forth in their presence, while heaven and earth endure. may they be made lords of all lands, for all that is great, good, noble, strong, and right, that the King my Lord has done for me. Let the King my Lord deign to order a sealed statement, to be kept in fulfilment of what, by his king's grant, Nabunadinsumu, the king's brother, gave us in writing. I have made it heard amongst my brethren ten times.'

The same writer apparently was made governor of a place called Beth Kutal ('the house of the wall'), and writes once more to thank the king for his favours with much humility, calling himself 'this grey-bearded dog of a servant' of the king. It seems probable that he may have been amnestied from among various persons implicated in the rebellion at Babylon.

The very strict inquisition into the proceedings of Government officials, in order to prevent corruption and abuses, is evident from other letters in this collection, one of which refers to confiscated lands near Babylon, as follows:

'To the King my Lord your servant Adarakhiddina. Peace be to the King my Lord. Akhsa . . ., and Belit . . . the Mudir, representing Nebousallim * of Beth Dakur, brought me much money in their hands, saying to me thus, "It is intended for us to buy horses."

* Previously noticed as intercessor for the people of the swamps.

Does the King my Lord know? About the multitude of chiefs and people of the distribution of Samasubni, whom the King my Lord sent before Nebousallim, though I spoke to him he did not permit it, he did not submit, (saying) thus, "I shall not permit you without the King's seal, and without a local Mudir." Belikisu, son of Bunanu, being sent to Babylon, and Borsippa, and Beth Dakur, took . . . He gave . . . as a gift to Belnasir. . . . His second daughter was given to . . . son of Nadinu, a . . . in Borsippa His third daughter was given to the son of Zakir, chief of the Associates of the god Nebo, of Beth Husanna, on the river, at the bend near Cutha and Az. He has given an hundred date palms, and an hundred acres of corn land, which belong to the King Nebodiniamur caused it to be given him, as property of Belikisu He, his father, and his grandfather had no power in the province of Babylon, and it was not in his charge Now whenever I see anything I send to the King my Lord. The King my Lord will do as he thinks fit'

This appears to have been a question of family interest in the assignment of confiscated lands. The next letter, which is considerably injured, refers to disputed arrears of tribute or taxes

'Sanini, who was in arrear to . . . borrowed it The son of Sadir gave a manah and a half of gold [100l] to . . . (the son of) Sadir was in arrears with the palace for this, we transferred it, they wrote about it from the palace He borrowed from a soldier It was erased. What Sanini had said of me came He has forgotten how he borrowed from myself personally He has brought this up against me. let him charge it to himself. . . .'

The next letter appears to refer to commissariat arrangements, the persons in charge having been sent with a letter of advice and taking back a report, on which they were to be paid for their services, receiving rations on the road:

'Following the men who brought me the oxen from Gozan to Sabiris, I sent them back I sent back a covering letter which I caused to be taken to be seen Amongst them are Kina the boatman and his company—three persons Sandapi the fodder master—three persons Kluhi the fumer—five persons Kuza the (hearer?)—four persons Fifteen in all, according to my letter of information. I sent round the local Mudir before them, from Sabiris to Gozan. He sent men to fetch nutriment for going on the roads.'

A confidential report on officers suggests that the selection had been unfortunate. The term 'down cast of eyes,' here used of one of the accused, occurs also in the Bible,* to designate the humble.

'The servants of my Lord's house (as the King to-day makes me explain) Tabba son of Bel-Kharranusur, whom the King my Lord sent

me as chief of a canton; Nebosakib, whom the King my Lord sent me as an humble person for secret service; Imur-Marduk, whom the King my Lord sent me as a local Múdir; these three officers are drunkards. When they are quite drunk, each having an iron dagger, one cannot circumvent their wrath. They are violent. I send, as he has appointed me, to the King my Lord. The King my Lord will do as he thinks right.'

In another letter the return of an expedition of some kind is announced, either a procession or a military force accompanied by the arks of the gods, as was usual. The writer says:

'At the end of the third day Assur and Adar, who sent forth safe, brought me safely back. All the gods he ordered me to show, with Assur, are placed safely in their places. The King's heart may rest; may Assur and Adar grant the King my Lord an hundred years.'

A short private letter of courtesy runs as follows:

'Letter of Marduk to his brother Kugalzu. May Bel and Nebo seek the peace of my brother. Why did I not see your messenger when he came to Borsippa? If I had seen your messenger you would have drunk a case of wine. It was forty bottles.'

The glories of this remarkable reign were remembered in later days, as is shown by a letter from one princess to another, referring to some cause of anger. The king first mentioned was an immediate successor of Assurbanipal, about 626 B.C.:

'Message of the King's daughter to the woman Assursarrat. Your letter has come. Write not your wrath: talk not lest they say, "Is not this the sister of Siruaitirat, the eldest daughter of the household that Assuritulilani established for us?"—a great King, a strong King, King of multitudes, King of Assyria—and thou the grand-daughter of the Queen, of the family of Assurbanipal, son of a great King, of the family of Esarhaddon, King of Assyria.'

These specimens are sufficient to give us considerable insight into the political affairs of Assyria during the time of its greatest power and prosperity. They show, however, that dangers already surrounded the throne, and that Babylonian discontent was among the greatest of these, in spite of the clemency and policy of the great king. Within twenty years of his death a combination of the Medes and Babylonians led to the ruin of Nineveh, while Necho from Egypt marched up to the fords of the Euphrates at Carchemish, where Nebuchadnezzar defeated him. The rebellious governor of Babylon, Nabopolassar, father of Nebuchad-

nezzar, in a text recently discovered * which describes the foundation of a temple, speaks of having purified Babylon : ' Our land which the oppressor seized, to establish in its midst a throne of righteousness.' ' On the day of its capture,' he says later, ' I set up votive tablets. Many officers were appointed; they rectified complaints, being upright in walking after Samas, Ramman, and Nebo.' ' Has not Nebochadrezzar, my eldest son, the delight of my heart, upheld the dominion faithfully and gloriously with my hosts?' He also specially mentions ' Sons of the race of this place whom I have made to rule.' Yet in spite of this final triumph Babylon also was destined to fall a prey to the new Aryan race, to which Medes and Persians alike belonged.

The picture of government that is to be drawn from such correspondence must modify the impression which we gain from the savage battle pictures, and from the boastful records which court scribes prepared. The Assyrians were eminently practical, and had great experience in the management of mixed populations. Their wars were mainly on the frontier, and kings who sent regular tribute were very little disturbed. The collection of so many texts by Assurbanipal, written in the Akkadian language and carefully translated, has been thought to be due to archaeological interest in ancient gods, auguries, and charms; but it is clear in other cases, where grammatical treatises were prepared, that the aim was far more practical; and that they were intended to assist those who had to deal with non-Semitic tribes, especially in the West. The Hittites were among these; yet it has been usually supposed that they were exterminated and carried captive by Sargon. A new text of Nebuchadrezzar, however, shows that they were still to be found, about 600 B.C., in their own country. The passage is as follows : †

' The princes of the land of the Hittites—for, by the command of Marduk my Lord I had destroyed their power—near the Euphrates to the west, were made to bring strong beams from Lebanon to my city Babylon. The rest of the widespread races of mankind, whom Marduk my Lord gave me, presented what I took of them, to make the house of the worship of God.'

But among the Babylonians the memory of the great Elamite wars long endured, and other texts give a picture of the utter ruin of the city, and even preserve a ballad in regular metre which has for its subject the destruction of an

* Nippur texts, No. 84.

† Nippur texts, No. 85.

impious Elamite who dared to desecrate one of the temples—a story recalling that of Heliodorus at Jerusalem. Such materials for history are found mingled with endless private and religious tablets, which are often very obscure; but no text can be left unread, for even on a boundary-stone protecting a field valuable historic information may occur, as in the case which may be given in conclusion of this paper,* where we appear to have a distinct statement of the time that elapsed between the accession of the Kassite king Gulkisar and the death of the Semitic king Nebuchadnezzar I. of Babylon, giving a date in exact accordance with other chronicles. The important passage may be read thus:

‘From Gulkisar, king of the sea-coast lands, to Nebuchadrezzar, King of Babylon, were 636 years. In the fourth year of Belnadinablu, Sakarabasa, son of Eanadinna, gave possession to Ilimelek of the fields.’

Gulkisar acceded in 1763 B.C., and Nebuchadnezzar I. in 1154 B.C., and the latter reigned twenty-six years, when he was succeeded by his eldest son in Babylon, and by Belnadinablu in the Chaldean region of the Shorelands. By the aid of such constantly accumulating materials we may hope in time—for the supply shows no signs of exhaustion—to be able to write the history of Western Asia, in these early times, with an amount of insight which a century ago would have seemed entirely incredible.

* Nippur texts, No. 83.

ART. X.—*Œuvres de M. Anatole France.* (1) *Balthazar*. (2) *Le Crime de Sylvestre Bonnard* (ouvrage couronné par l'Académie française). (3) *L'Étui de Nacre*. (4) *Le Jardin d'Épicure*. (5) *Jocaste et le Chat Maigre*. (6) *Le Livre de mon Ami*. (7) *Le Lys Rouge*. (8) *Les Opinions de M. Jérôme Coignard*. (9) *Le Puits de Sainte Claire*. (10) *La Rôtisserie de la Reine Pédauque*. (11) *Thaïs*. (12) *La Vie Littéraire*. (13) HISTOIRE CONTEMPORAINE: (a) *L'Orme du Mail*; (b) *Le Mannequin d'Osier*; (c) *L'Anneau d'Améthyste*; (d) *Monsieur Bergeret à Paris*.—(14) *Clio*.

IN M. Octave Mirbeau's notorious novel, a novel which it would be complimentary to describe as naturalistic, the heroine is warned by her director against the works of M. Anatole France. 'Ne lisez jamais du Voltaire . . . c'est 'un péché mortel . . . ni du Renan . . . ni de l'Anatole France. Voilà qui est dangereux.' The names are appropriately united: a real, if not precisely an apostolical, succession exists between the three writers. If it would be too much to say of Nature that

'To make the third, she joined the former two,'

it is certain that the author of 'La Rôtisserie de la Reine Pédauque' has much both of Voltaire and of Renan in his composition; without them he would have been other than he is. Nor is the prohibition of the director untrue to life; it is improbable that a spiritual adviser would recommend the works of M. Anatole France to those who consulted him as to their reading. If, indeed, these works are not on the 'Index Librorum Prohibitorum,' it must be due to an oversight on the part of the Congregation charged with its compilation. For M. France is an inveterate disturber of the dogmatic slumber to which the natural man takes so kindly, and from which the Church is slow to rouse him. A living note of interrogation, he takes nothing for granted; he questions, speculates, criticises; his instinct leads him, if not to deny, at least to doubt. And his scepticism is of the insidious sort that cometh not with observation; it is conveyed in an apostrophe, a parable, an apologue, and is most dangerous when least obvious and least direct. 'Pontius, te souvient-il de cet homme?' is the question put to the ex-Procurator of Judea with regard to the Central

Figure of history. 'Pontius Pilate fronça les sourcils et porta la main à son front comme quelqu'un qui cherche dans sa mémoire. Puis, après quelques instants de silence : "Jésus," murmura-t-il, "Jésus, de Nazareth ? Je ne me rappelle pas." *'

To represent M. France as one of the giants of literature would be extravagant. As well endow Ariel with the stature and sinews of a Titan: this were to miss his distinctive qualities; delicacy, elegance, charm. He belongs to a category of writers who are more read and probably exercise more influence than those of greater name. The latter show us life as a whole; but life as a whole is too vast and too remote to excite in most of us more than a somewhat languid curiosity; the former confine themselves to what, to those who think and feel at all, is an object of the keenest personal interest, the life of the world we live in. And it is here that M. France excels. His knowledge is wide, his sympathies are many-sided, his power of exposition is unsurpassed: no one has set before us the mind of our time, with its half-lights, its shadowy vistas, its indefiniteness, its haze on the horizon, so vividly as he. Many generations have gone to make it: the heir of a long past, it embodies their achievements and their aspirations, their dreams and their disillusionments, their failures and their regrets. So much learned, so little known; so much promise, so little fulfilment; so much blood poured like water on the earth, yet the earth how barren, the harvest how scanty! To interpret it is no easy matter; the general impression that it leaves on us is one of bewilderment, of an apparently inextricable confusion of ideas and tendencies. Earnestness is disguised as trifling, tenderness as cynicism, piety as indifference, faith as unbelief. While, on the other hand, we find low standards going with high professions, immorality posing as virtue, policy as religion, the secular as the spiritual, the ignorance of man as the wisdom of God. The moral of the whole being the old one, that appearances are to be distrusted; that things are not, or at least are seldom, what they seem. Hence the necessity and the justification of scepticism. Believe not every spirit, is sense as well as Scripture; we question in order that we may not be deceived.

The civilisation of the Latin races, unlike our own, is a city civilisation; the connotation of such words as *urbane*,

rustic, pagan, bears witness to the respective estimation in which they held town and country life. To the Frenchman Paris is France, and the highest compliment you can pay him is to take him for a Parisian: all that is best and most characteristic in the life of the nation, its quickness, its intelligence, its brilliancy, centres in the capital. With us the reverse is the case. The last thing that an Englishman wishes is to be thought a Londoner: the Cockney is a ridiculous person who drops his 'h's,' and can neither shoot, nor ride to hounds. M. France is essentially Parisian, savouring of the asphalte, not of the soil. The autobiographical '*Livre de mon Ami*' represents a modest home in which intellectual were of more account than material interests; a sensitive, observant and somewhat meditative childhood passed in and moulded by the as yet un-Hausmannised city. The training produced an academic talent, with a dash of the boulevard. Paris is not, or was not thirty years ago, on so enormous and unwieldy a scale as London; and it was a greater centre than London is, or has ever been. The intelligence of the nation was concentrated there; it possessed a literary tradition; in spite of their bickerings, which were incessant, the freemasonry of letters formed a bond of union between literary men. The novice knew, at least by sight and by repute, the masters of his craft; intercourse was easy and informal; there was a camaraderie between younger and older men. The atmosphere breathed was historical; not a street but had its memories; the bouquinists and printsellers on the quays between the Pont Neuf and the Pont Royal with their old books, their old engravings and the bric-à-brac, faded and grey with the dust of years, that speaks to us of generations dead and buried—to have been brought up among these things was in itself a liberal education; it developed a sense of the past, and a disposition to regard it not merely as the permanent background of life, but as a constituent of the present, a part of to-day. The most important part, perhaps, for the past has made us; the living are always, a philosopher reminds us, and more and more as time advances, under the dominion of the dead. So that the transition from the one to the other is easy: to the unsophisticated mind of youth—and there are those who retain it through life—the barriers of time and space are but half closed. Imagination passes them, and a thousand years are as yesterday. The boy of '*Le Livre de mon Ami*' is drawn from real life. He reads the '*Lives of the Saints*,' and he is himself, to the perturba-

tion of the household, a hermit in the Thebaid; the 'Odyssey,' and he is a sailor of the age of the heroes, afloat upon a violet sea. He sees Nausicaa and her maidens at the spring, Circe weaving spells in her hollow caverns, the Cyclops on the cliffs threatening shipwrecked mariners; the Sirens make music for him as, lashed to the mast and stretching ineffectual hands to the singers, he skirts their perilous coast. So life and the world are idealised, nor can later contact with reality dispel the charm. For reality is what we make it; to those in whom the Divine dwells it is transfigured, and all things are full of gods. 'Il est beau . . . d'avoir rêvé dans son enfance: il en reste un parfum' et comme une tradition de poésie qui défraie l'âge où l'on n'imagine plus.' This manifold inner life has given M. France a rare power of perspective, of reproducing and interpreting the past. His 'Thaïs' is not, perhaps, as edifying as 'Fabiola,' but it gives a truer picture of early Christianity; the mixture of the enthusiast and the demagogue in the Nubian martyr Alimès; the gradual undermining of the sanctity of Paphnutius; the victory of instinct, depraved because unnaturally suppressed, over acquired habit; the explosion of passion that in an instant wrecks his whole moral life, and reveals the human brute in his native hideousness—all this is actual to the verge of pain. The element of the dervish in the Egyptian solitaries, the kinship of their spirit with that of their Mahomedan successors, this identity in difference, these contact points between different ages and creeds are noted: 'il y a déjà du marabout et du mahdi dans les vieux moines chrétiens de la vallée du Nil.'* The greatest divine of our time ranked Gibbon high among writers of Church history. M. France possesses gifts which, had he specialised in that department, would have marked him out for excellence; 'pour faire l'histoire d'une religion, il faut ne plus y croire, mais il faut y avoir cru.' It is the pedant only who will fail to estimate aright the power of religion in human life and history; there is an intolerant and irrational unbelief as well as an intolerant and irrational faith. But those who have even an elementary knowledge of our nature, with its undergrowths, its unconscious returns upon itself, its latent and unsuspected possibilities, will understand the subtle, sensuous and ineffaceable charm of a symbolism which breaks down the wall of partition between the visible and

* La Vie Littéraire, iii, 141.

the invisible, and throws the glamour of eternity over the things of time.

'Les femmes ont senti passer dans leurs poitrines
Le mol embrasement d'un souffle oriental.
Une sainte épouvante a gonflé leurs narines,
Sous les dieux apparus loin de leur ciel natal . . .
Elle les voit si beaux ! Son âme avide et tendre,
Que le siècle brutal fatigua sans retour,
Cherche entre ces esprits indulgents à qui tendre
L'ardente et lourde fleur de son dernier amour . . .
Et Leuconoe goûte éperdument le charme
D'adorer un enfant et de pleurer un dieu.' *

Nor is it women only who are thus influenced: there is that in us which is deeper than the sex distinction; human nature is common to women and to men. Religion, however, covers one side only, though a very important side, of human nature; and M. France is a connoisseur of human nature as a whole. His types are taken from many sources; they represent all sorts and conditions of men. The grotesque frequenters of the 'Chat Maigre,' erratic and out-at-elbows, jostle the elegant frequenters of the salons of the 'Lys Rouge': in the studies of contemporary France, which begin with 'L'Orme du Mail' and end with 'M. Bergetet à Paris'—studies which, under a slight form, embody the experience of a shrewd observer, and contain more material for future historians than many more pretentious volumes—préfets and generals, ministers and financiers, great ladies and their train of admirers, priests, intransigent and opportunist, pass under our eyes. They are sketches rather than finished portraits; but the art is so skilful that a line suggests a character—there is no need to fill in the detail. The Papal Nuncio, for instance, Monsignor Cima, who, with half-closed eyes, sees everything and commits himself to nothing: how exactly he takes the measure of the aspirants to the vacant see of Tourcoing; how adroitly he turns the conversation from the duties of the episcopate to less burning topics—the vintages of Orleans and the climate of Rome! To know all, it has been said, is to pardon all; it is also, perhaps, if not to lose faith in all, to be not a little disillusioned, to be slow to take men and things at their own valuation. Having learned by experience that heroes are few, the philosopher is not given to hero-worship; aware that ideas, when they become current

* Les Noces Corinthiennes.

and take concrete shape, lose much of their original content, he is no enthusiast; his attitude towards life is acquiescent—he takes it as he finds it and as it comes. He would not burn well, disapproving the obstinacy of the martyr only less than the cruelty of the persecutor: ‘il maintint ses opinions, jusqu’au feu exclusivement, estimant par avance, avec Montaigne, que mourir pour une idée, c’est mettre à bien haut prix les conjectures.’* To some this temper will seem incompatible with idealism in any shape: it destroys, they think, the romance which, for those who have eyes to see, paints life in such exquisite colours, and rends the veil of the temple in twain. A well-known Eton tutor of the last generation discouraged his pupils from reading Thackeray because of his cynicism; the Rabbis, to go further back, esteemed Jeremiah the least of the prophets on account of his fault-finding; this is the reason, they tell us, why his prophecy is inscribed, ‘The words of Jeremiah,’† instead of ‘The word of God.’ It is possible, of course, to fix one’s attention on the faults of men and things rather than on their excellencies. Those who do this are greatly to be pitied. The best of men fail somewhere, because they are human; the most necessary and beneficent forms of society—the family, the State, the Church—have their less worthy side, because they are composed of and administered by men. But to have eyes for faults only argues a defective vision: if we can see nothing but what is little in great men, nothing but what is mischievous in great institutions, and nothing but what is contemptible in great ideas, we may be sure that there is something wrong, not with them, but with ourselves.

But there is another side to this. The more important idealising is perceived to be, the more important it becomes to idealise rightly. ‘Never marry but for love; but see that thou lov’st what is lovely:’ the lover should be provided with Ithuriel’s spear to discern the counterfeit from the true. Too often this is not so; too often enthusiasm, like love, is blind. And in this case truth revenges itself. If the idea for which we are enthusiastic is false, if the institution which we champion is mischievous, the greater our enthusiasm and the more passionate our championship, the more injurious are both to ourselves and to the community of which we are members. Enthusiasm is like a river, beneficent when confined between its banks, a devastating flood when it overflows

* *La Vie Littéraire*, iii. 31.

† *Jeremiah*, i. 1.

them : a power uncontrolled, mighty for evil ; guided by knowledge and regulated by reason, mighty for good. It is difficult, indeed, to unite the two—enthusiasm and reason ; for the one is quick, the other slow. The fire of passion kindles at a touch ; knowledge advances step by step and tentatively ; we are impatient of her reserves, her qualifications, her circumspection, her measured pace. A certain narrowness of vision goes with the temperament of action. It was easy, for example, to burn heretics, when men were certain that the heretic was a centre of contagion ; it was easy to send nobles and priests to the scaffold, as long as men were convinced that with their disappearance a new age of liberty and virtue would open. But as soon as we are not quite sure action is paralysed ; and unlearning goes hand-in-hand with learning. The more we know, the more we realise the many-sidedness of things, the complexity of what at first seemed simple, the more impossible we find it to be quite sure. Especially do we learn to distrust great names and high professions. Liberalism does not always make for liberty ; churches do not always make for religion ; party divisions have ceased to correspond—probably they never did correspond—with facts. The hard-and-fast lines which we draw between our conceptions exist for thought only, not in things ; and if we transfer them to things we get into hopeless difficulty. Men are neither good nor bad, but a mixture of good and evil ; ideas are neither true nor false, they contain some truth and some falsehood. Things, in short, shade off into one another : they are neither wholly this nor wholly that—it depends upon the point of view from which we look at them—but both, or neither, or something between the two. And a man's usefulness in life depends, as a rule, on his recognising this ; nothing bars the way to a higher ideal so effectually as committal to and persistence in a lower ; the Church may become the enemy of religion, a party of the State. Before we surrender ourselves to the generous impetuosities of enthusiasm, let us remember this.

How many, taking names for things, have committed themselves in early years to ideals which their maturer judgement disapproved, and against which their conscience, better informed, revolted : have discovered too late that the gods to whose service their youthful ardours pledged them were fashioned by human ignorance and ambition from the commonest clay. Hence, too often, irretrievable moral ruin. Life is lived out in bad faith, because men are too indolent or too self-interested to break away from the bondage of

habit and circumstance: a false sentiment of loyalty to the past and to engagements entered into in ignorance of their real nature ensures a nominal allegiance to a creed which has ceased to command belief or respect. It is an allegiance as destitute of honour as of reality; if there is in the world such a thing as atheism, as infidelity, it is here. Religion is rejected because the superstition which has been taken for religion is seen in its true colours; God is held a thing of naught, because the gods of the heathen, which we ignorantly worshipped, are recognised as the work of men's hands. And we find ourselves stranded high and dry upon the shore: the tide of life rolls by, but we are outside its genial current, without usefulness or hope in the world. Such a state is existence, not life. Let us look well before we enter on a course that may land us in it. For many, perhaps for most of us, doubt is a duty—not for the doubt's sake, but in order to know for certain, and so be able to reject the evil and choose the good.

M. Bergeret, of the '*Histoire Contemporaine*,' is a doubter of this sort. He distinguishes, for example, the substance of the commonwealth from its form so sharply as to seem an indifferent patriot. The explanation is that, remembering the high endeavours that made and the high hopes that welcomed democracy, he is indignant in his heart of hearts that the results of democracy should be what they are. Enthusiasm for the Jew préfet, M. Worms-Clavelin, or the venal senator, M. Lapret-Teulet, would be misplaced. The republicans of the first generation pictured more heroic representatives of the sovereignty of the people than these. But the actual falls short of the ideal, which, indeed, would not be an ideal were it otherwise. When the legitimist Abbé Lantaigne declaims against the Third Republic, he answers, in the vein and with the sincerity of a candid friend to the incriminated form of government:—

'Ce régime est, peu s'en faut, tel que vous le représentez. Et c'est encore celui que je préfère. Tous les liens y sont relâchés, ce qui affaiblit l'État, mais soulage les personnes, et procure une certaine facilité de vivre, et une liberté que détruisent malheureusement les tyrannies locales. La corruption sans doute y paraît plus grande que dans les monarchies. Cela tient au nombre et à la diversité des gens qui sont portés au pouvoir. Mais cette corruption serait moins visible si le secret en était mieux gardé. Le défaut de secret et le manque de suite rendent toute entreprise impossible à la République démocratique. Mais, comme les entreprises des monarchies ont le plus souvent ruiné les peuples, je ne suis pas trop fâché de vivre sous un

gouvernement incapable de grands desseins. . . . Le pire défaut du régime actuel est de coûter fort cher. . . . Il s'aperçoit qu'il est embarrassé. Et ses embarras sont plus grands qu'il ne croit. Ils augmenteront encore. Le mal n'est pas nouveau. C'est celui dont mourut l'ancien régime. Monsieur l'abbé, je vais vous dire une grande vérité : tant que l'État se contente des ressources que lui fournissent les pauvres, tant qu'il a assez des subsides que lui assurent, avec une régularité mécanique, ceux qui travaillent de leurs mains, il vit heureux, tranquille, honoré. Mais dès que ce malheureux État, pressé par le besoin, fait mine de demander de l'argent à ceux qui en ont, et de tirer des riches quelque faible contribution, on lui fait sentir qu'il commet un odieux attentat, viole tous les droits, manque de respect à la chose sacrée, détruit le commerce et l'industrie, et écrase les pauvres en touchant aux riches. . . . L'État touche à la rente. Il est perdu. . . . Nos ministres se moquent de nous en parlant de péril clérical ou de péril socialiste. Il n'y a qu'un péril, le péril financier. La République commence à s'en apercevoir. Je la plains, je la regretterai. J'ai été nourri sous l'Empire, dans l'amour de la République. "Elle est la justice," me disait mon père, professeur de rhétorique au lycée de Saint-Omer. Il ne la connaissait pas. Elle n'est pas la justice. Mais elle est la facilité. . . . Pourvu qu'elle vive, elle est contente. Elle gouverne peu. Je serais tenté de l'en louer plus que de tout le reste. Et puis qu'elle gouverne peu, je lui pardonne de gouverner mal. Je soupçonne les hommes d'avoir, de tout temps, beaucoup exagéré les nécessités du gouvernement et les bienfaits d'un pouvoir fort. Assurément les pouvoirs forts font les peuples grands et prospères. Mais les peuples ont tant souffert, au long des siècles, de leur grandeur et de leur prospérité, que je conçois qu'ils y renoncent. La gloire leur a coûté trop cher pour qu'on ne sache pas gré à nos maîtres actuels de nous en procurer que de la coloniale. Si l'on découvrait enfin l'inutilité de tout gouvernement, la République de M. Carnot aurait préparé cette inappréciable découverte. Et il faudrait lui en avoir quelque reconnaissance. Toute réflexion faite, je me sens très attaché à nos institutions.* *

Such qualified appreciation would scarcely satisfy a convinced republican, nor, royalist as he is, does it commend itself to M. Lantaigne, who, with the instinct of a priest, puts his finger on the scepticism that underlies it. 'Vous vous exprimez agréablement, monsieur Bergeret. Les rhéteurs parlaient de la sorte dans Rome quand Alaric y entra avec ses Visigoths. Toutefois les rhéteurs du V^e siècle jetaient sous les térébinthes de l'Esquiline des pensées moins vaines. Car alors Rome était chrétienne. Vous ne l'êtes plus.' The answer, perhaps, is that scepticism, if this be scepticism, is in the air of our time; we can escape it only by living in the past, or by dividing ourselves into

water-tight compartments, one for religion, the other for real life. The former course is the refuge of despair, the latter an admission of indifference or insincerity. In vain do we attempt to retain methods of thought and modes of feeling when the conditions which made them possible have passed away.

To say that mediæval conceptions of the world and life were fixed, while modern are fluid, may appear an overstatement. The principle of development was at work in mediæval society, or it could not have, as it did, developed; there is an element of stability in our own, or it could not, as it does, hold together. But certainly fixity was the characteristic of mediæval thought. The universe, the expression of the Divine will, reflected the Divine unchangingness; the vault of heaven stood fast above us, the earth below. And the permanence of the external frame in which life was set found a parallel in the inner world of knowledge; truth was one, revelation final, dogma yesterday, to-day, and for ever the same. The social order as it stood was of Divine appointment: the two swords, the spiritual and temporal power, had been delegated by Christ to their respective holders; the powers that be are ordained of God. And the future was as stereotyped as the present: heaven or hell, one or other, lay before the individual, each without change or respite—bliss or torment unceasing and without end. Then, indeed, as now, the facts were too large for the theory; then, as now, a compromise with them had to be, and, as a matter of fact, was, effected. But the theory was as has been stated. We may call it the mediæval theory, for it was that on which the mediæval world built and was built.

Our own standpoint is diametrically opposed to this. Becoming rather than Being is the note of the world as we conceive it: all things change. The permanence even of Nature is apparent only: the earth we live on is the scene of a perpetual process of transformation; in the abyss of space in which they are suspended worlds are born and die. Man is not a fixed point, but a term in an ascending series: the mind and its content have become what they are in virtue of a movement which carries thought and things with it in its ceaseless growth. The society in which we live has taken shape by slow degrees under the action and reaction of its several factors. The Republic, which M. Lantaigne abhors and M. Bergeret tolerates, is the outcome of the Empire and the Monarchy; conditioned, that is to say, by

history, the heir of the past. Our religious beliefs and institutions, unchanging as we are apt to conceive them, can be traced to humble and scarcely recognisable germs, which have developed according to known laws and under definite historical influences; the world has moulded the Church rather than the Church the world. And the mediæval standpoint has become impossible. We do not look out with awe-struck eyes at a world which God has made and in which He has placed us; rather we endeavour to make ourselves acquainted with the mechanism of a system which men have put together and have to keep in working order, adjusting, balancing, correcting, as time and necessity suggest. The two views are not exclusive; points of contact may be established between them. But according as we survey the world from one or the other we incline to acquiescence or to criticism, to resignation or to reform.

Again, there is a further distinction than that between mediæval and modern—that between men of thought and men of action, those who speculate on and those who work in the world. The temperament which surveys the world is other than that which makes and fashions it. The one regards it as a spectator, the other as an actor: the one looks at it from without, impersonally; the other from within, as a thing of which he himself is part and parcel, a dwelling which it is his interest to make habitable and commodious for its inmates, of whom he is one. M. France belongs to the former class. His sense of humour saves him from assuming the airs of a superior person: he includes himself in the world which he surveys. But his opinion of his fellow-men is not flattering. His estimate of their understanding is low, and of their morality lower; he expects little of them, hence his evenness of temper: he is not disappointed when little comes. He believes, as many eminent persons, Dr. Johnson among them, have believed before him, that laws and government can do little to increase the happiness or to improve the fortunes of mankind. This belief, erroneous in itself, would be mischievous in the extreme were it generally, or even widely, held. That everything is much the same, and that nothing much matters—quietism of this kind would bring life to a standstill; and the first thing is to live. Perhaps, at least in the West, it is scarcely more than skin-deep. It is difficult to conceive Johnson practising non-resistance; and M. France's theoretical aloofness has neither chilled his sympathies nor weakened his powers of action when action became impera-

tive on right-minded men. The 'Affaire' was a test, and M. France stood the test. And while there is little danger, taking men as they are, of the attitude of passivity becoming common, it is not without its use, as a theory, in the way of protest against the simplicity, real or affected, which supposes that a stroke of an official pen can, like the fiat of Omnipotence, make and unmake, and against the sentimental and facile optimism which traces the evils that afflict humanity to the misdeeds of rulers and the injustice of laws. The problems of life are more complex than we suppose. Human nature changes, but it changes slowly; opinions, beliefs, standards of conduct modify, but we do not see them moving; we see only that they have moved. We need not quarrel, then, with M. France for his scepticism, for scepticism is part of the spirit of the time, from which we can no more escape than from our shadow; for his quietism, which need not be taken too literally; nor for the copious douches of cold water which he administers to unworthy ideals, unreasonable hopes, and unreal enthusiasms. Ridicule does not necessarily kill; it discriminates, supplying what in the sphere of mind corresponds to the struggle for existence in Nature: the unfit perish under it, the fit survive.

Schools of literature succeed one another more rapidly in France than here: that in which M. Anatole France graduated seems like an echo out of a past more distant than the years, when we reckon them, make it. One of his early poems, 'Les Noces Corinthiennes,' has been lately dramatised at the Odéon; but till this was so, it found few readers of our generation: the thoughts of the author come to us filtered into new forms through the strata that lie between us and the 'Parnasse Contemporain.' The critical note predominates in them. Novels, such as 'Le Crime de Sylvestre Bonnard'; historical studies, such as 'Thais'; tales and sketches, such as 'L'Étui de Nacre' or 'Le Puits de Sainte-Claire,' all reflect the same temper—a temper ironical, yet kindly; mocking, yet with a considerable admixture of sentiment; sceptical of appearances and professions, yet not without reverence for what deserves reverence; the scepticism is not that of the heart, but of the head. The criticisms, in the strict sense of the word, republished under the title of 'La Vie Littéraire,' originally appeared in the 'Temps.' It is not too much to say that they recall the 'Causeries du Lundi,' the golden age of Sainte-Beuve. Not all the writers who pass under review in these four

volumes are familiar to the average English reader; nor is criticism a plant which flourishes on English soil. Of reviewing, indeed, we have enough and to spare, from the column in the weekly or paragraph in the daily paper which undertakes the practical task of introducing the author to his public, to the full-dress article in the monthly or quarterly, in which the big guns of political or philosophical theory are brought to bear on the position selected for discussion. We are a serious people, and treat literature seriously: the reviewer takes his seat on the bench with dignity, conscious of the black cap in reserve. There are occasions when solemn functions of this kind are called for; when necessary M. France, too, can be judicial, and deal with literary crime and pretension as they deserve.* But cases calling for such treatment are exceptional; for everyday use the *causerie*, with its fineness, its delicacy, its lightness of touch, is to be preferred. The author of 'Essays in Criticism' attempted to naturalise this style among us, but he left no successor; and the attempt cost him his reputation for seriousness. People would not believe that he was in earnest; his sermons—and he preached excellent sermons—were received with a smile. This ponderousness argues a certain provincialism in English thinking, an incapacity for effects of light and shade. In criticism *nuance* is everything; the critic to the manner born produces his effects with a touch. He deals in irony, rather than in denunciation; in suggestion, rather than in direct assertion or denial. He conveys an idea in a tone; a line calls up a picture; he does not dogmatise; he shows us what we are thinking, though we do not know how to express it, ourselves. And it is to criticism that the future belongs.

'La critique est la dernière en date de toutes les formes littéraires; elle finira peut-être par les absorber toutes. Elle convient admirablement à une société très civilisée dont les souvenirs sont riches et les traditions déjà longues. Elle est particulièrement appropriée à une humanité curieuse, savante et polie. Pour prospérer, elle suppose plus de culture que n'en demandent toutes les autres formes littéraires. Elle eut pour créateurs Montaigne, Saint-Evremond, Bayle et Montesquieu. Elle procède à la fois de la philosophie et de l'histoire. Il lui a fallu, pour se développer, une époque d'absolue liberté intellectuelle. Elle remplace la théologie, et, si l'on cherche le docteur

* La Vie Littéraire, i. 225 (La Terre), and ii. 56 (Hors de la Littérature).

universel, le saint Thomas d'Aquin du XIX^e siècle, n'est-ce pas à Sainte-Beuve qu'il faut songer ?' *

Those who set a high value on style will place M. France in the very first rank of contemporary stylists: since Renan no one has written such French as he. 'Il s'y trouve du Racine, du Voltaire, du Flaubert, du Renan; et c'est toujours de l'Anatole France. Cet homme a la perfection dans la grâce: il est l'extrême fleur du génie latin.' † If M. Lemaître's appreciation seems pitched in too high a key, let the reader open 'Le Crime de Sylvestre Bonnard,' almost at random: 'Étoiles qui avez lui sur la tête légère ou pesante de tous mes ancêtres oubliés, c'est à votre clarté que je sens éveiller en moi un regret douloureux. Je voudrais avoir un fils qui vous voie encore quand je ne serais plus.' Let him turn to the apostrophe to Verlaine: 'Tu as failli, mais tu as confessé ta faute. Tu fus un malheureux, mais tu n'as jamais menti. Pauvre Samaritain, à travers ton babil d'enfant et tes hoquets de malade, il t'a été donné de prononcer des paroles célestes. Nous sommes des Pharisiens. Tu es le meilleur et le plus heureux.' ‡ Or to the exhortation addressed by M. Jérôme Coignard, under the porch of Saint-Benoît-le-Bétourné, to Catherine:

'Je ne me suis jamais fait une idée exagérée du péché de la chair. C'est une justice qu'on peut me rendre. . . . Mais ce que je ne puis souffrir, c'est la bassesse de l'âme, c'est l'hypocrisie, c'est le mensonge, et cette crasse ignorance, qui fait de votre frère Ange un capucin accompli. Vous prenez dans son commerce, mademoiselle, une habitude de crapule qui vous ravale bien au-dessous de votre condition, laquelle est celle de fille galante. J'en sais les hontes et les mi-ères; mais c'est un état bien supérieur à celui de capucin. Songez, mademoiselle, à toutes les vertus dont vous pourriez encore vous orner, dans votre incertain métier, et dont une seule peut-être vous ouvrirait un jour le paradis, si vous n'étiez soumise et assujettie à cette bête immonde. Tout en vous laissant prendre ça et là ce qu'il faut bien finalement qu'on vous laisse quand on s'en va, vous pourriez, Catherine, fleurir en foi, en espérance et en charité, aimer les pauvres et visiter les malades. Vous pourriez être aumônière et compatissante, et vous délecter chastement à la vue du ciel, des eaux, des bois et des champs. Vous pourriez, le matin, ouvrant votre fenêtre, louer Dieu en écoutant chanter les oiseaux. Vous pourriez, aux jours de pèlerinage, gravir la montagne de Saint-Valérien et là, sous le calvaire, pleurer doucement votre innocence perdue. Vous pourriez faire en sorte que l'celui qui seul lit dans les cœurs dise: 'Catherine est ma créature, et je la reconnais aux restes d'une belle lumière qui n'est point éteinte en elle.' §

* La Vie Littéraire, i. préface. † Les Contemporains, vi. 275.

‡ La Vie Littéraire, iii. 318.

§ Les Opinions de M. Jérôme Coignard, 57.

The thing could not be better done; and here the style is the man; the substance and the form, the thought and its expression are one. For symmetry and sense of proportion are not qualities of form only; they work from within outward, and are significant of a temperament. In spite of the subjectivity of standpoint with which M. Brunetière reproaches him, M. France is a classic: he has the sense of limit; the eighteenth century is strong in him, and in an age when transgressors wax wanton his trumpet gives no uncertain sound. He is a classic, however, with the reserves of modern psychology: 'la vérité est qu'on ne sort jamais 'de soi-même.' The bearings of this position are obvious: 'telle que je l'entends, la critique est, comme la philosophie 'et l'histoire, une espèce de roman à l'usage des esprits 'avisés et curieux. Le bon critique est celui qui raconte 'les aventures de son âme au milieu des chefs-d'œuvre.'* But he is too urbane, too tolerant to be a fanatic; remembering that strife is the father of all things, he prefers rather than excludes. Party names in literature, as in politics and religion, are misleading; they cover men who differ widely from one another in temperament, sympathy, and aim. From Chateaubriand and Victor Hugo to M. Zola and the later schools of our own day is a long step; but Romanticists, Naturalists, Symbolists, Decadents, differ as they may in other respects, have one note in common—the abnormal, the extravagant; they agree in defiance of law. Law tends to become convention, they urge, and convention conventionality; we must be living, human, if we are to depict and gain the ear of men. But it is a sound instinct which bids us distrust the *ἄπειρον*: the sense of limit belongs to sanity, and is natural to normally constituted minds. The savage devours his food raw, the civilised man cooks it; and the case of experience runs on parallel lines. We do not take it as it comes, haphazard; we select, adapt, rationalise, putting something mental, something of ourselves, as it were, into it before it is ready for use. Neglect of this process of preparation has made Naturalism a by-word: 'le naturalisme interdit à l'écrivain 'tout acte intellectuel, toute manifestation morale; il mène 'droit à l'imbecillité flamboyante. C'est ainsi qu'il a produit 'la littérature dite décadente et symbolique. Son crime 'impardonnable est de tuer la pensée.'†

* La Vie Littéraire, i. préface.

† Ibid. ii. 305.

Again, art is the embodiment in fixed forms of the element of beauty in Nature; not everything that is to be found in Nature, but the beautiful only, is its subject-matter. If this be idealism—and all art is, in a sense, idealism—it can be avoided only by a counter-idealism which is the negation of art. For the stereotyping involved in the embodiment of the idea in a concrete form magnifies; and the naturalist school sees and presents the world out of focus in consequence: the beast in man is, like the head of the Gorgon, death to those who see it. Art, in short, is to Nature what mind is to sense: it discriminates and interprets. Under its action the universe of things, in itself formless, takes form and meaning; the world as we know it springs to being before our eyes. Here, as throughout, relativity is the condition of knowledge; to no two human beings does Nature present precisely the same aspect, to no two minds does the same formula express precisely the same meaning. But the relative is not the subjective: there is an approximate standard to which, as a matter of fact, normally constituted faculties conform. Our sensations and judgements, that is to say, though not the same, are similar, and vary within certain limits. How are trespassers on the forbidden land beyond to be dealt with? How are we to meet offences against the code of letters? against good taste, or society, or morals? Considerations of another order suggest themselves too easily; a short and summary method of procedure commends itself at once to the moralist and the doctrinaire. The school of which M. Brunetière is the champion looks to authority for the remedy: it would impose a dogma, and establish an Index; the Syllabus itself could ask no more. Plausible arguments may be adduced for such a policy. Torquemada was personally, in all probability, no less amiable and humane than M. Brunetière; the arguments of mediæval writers for mediæval methods of dealing with heresy and heretics were plausible in the extreme. But the weapons of our warfare are spiritual; ideas must be met by ideas. M. France supports this doctrine on *a priori* grounds.

‘Certaines philosophies qui portent en elles la négation de toute morale ne peuvent entrer dans l’ordre des faits que sous la forme du crime. Dès qu’elles se font acte elles tombent sous la vindicte des lois. Je persiste à croire, toutefois, que la pensée a dans sa sphère propre des droits imprescriptibles, et que tout système philosophique peut être légitimement exposé.’ *

Reasoning of this sort is, perhaps, not very conclusive: the liberty of prophesying may be based on grounds which, if less abstract, are less assailable—experience and utility. The theories propounded by M. Adrian Sixte in ‘*Le Disciple*,’ to take the case which M. France has in view, are detestable, and subversive of morals and of society. But there is one thing more injurious in the long run to morals and to society than their propagation—that is, their suppression by force. Translated into action, the law deals with them. And the law is no respecter of theories: free will and determinism are alike indifferent to it. Its object is not to punish the criminal, but to defend the community from crime. ‘You are sentenced,’ said the judge to the horse-stealer, ‘not because you have stolen a horse, but in order that horses may not be stolen.’ But as long as theories remain words only, experience bids us let them be; the policy of the Inquisition is a blunder as well as, or even more than, a crime. In the province of ideas, at least, force is no remedy: the two are not parallel; as well take up a cudgel against a ghost. Nor could the control of opinion by authority, were it possible, fail to be mischievous; no authority can safely be entrusted with such control, for authority supports not what ought to be, but what is. It opposes change as such: while, even where the proposed change seems to be, or is, for the worse, we dare not permit its advocates to be silenced. The colours of good and evil are too mixed to make this tolerable; we must let the two grow together till the harvest, and have faith in the power of good to hold its own. In times of panic we forget this, and clamour for exceptional legislation against the anarchy which threatens the social order, and will bring down, we think, the fabric of civilisation about our ears. This fabric, however, is made of stronger stuff than we suppose, and will outlast its assailants. For society is founded, not on convention, but on human nature; and this may be trusted to assert itself, theorise as men will.

The eighteenth century, it has been said, is strong in M. France: he has embodied much of its spirit, sceptical at once and humanitarian, in what is, perhaps, his happiest creation—M. l’Abbé Jérôme Coignard, sometime Professor of Rhetoric at the College of Beauvais and Librarian to the Bishop of Séz, subsequently, his philosophy unaffected by his changed fortunes, preceptor to Jacques Tournebroke, and the oracle of the *Rôtisserie de la Reine Pédauque*. Few characters in fiction are more living than this unconventional

ecclesiastic; few possess a richer store of human nature, or sounder qualities of head and heart. We regard his frailties with indulgence, as arguing neither malice nor depravity; from more serious faults, from the defects of his age and calling, he is free. 'Sur les racines de l'orthodoxie, son âme luxuriante fleurit singulièrement en épicurisme et en humilité.'* Light lie the earth upon him! it covers many a worse man, many a less worthy Christian than he. In him, as in M. Bergeret, of the *Histoire Contemporaine*, and M. Sylvestre Bonnard, Membre de l'Institut, we have the temper of the philosopher applied, with difference of character and circumstance, to life—a temper acute, perhaps somewhat over-tolerant, a little wearied, slow to action, inclined in theory at least to despond. The thinker is seldom a radical reformer: his vocation is to deal with ideas rather than with things. Indirectly, indeed, and in the long run, thought realises itself, for the rational is the real and the real is the rational; but, for practical purposes, pure theory has to be translated into applied science, and in so complex an organisation as society change is slow. The philosopher would not, perhaps, have it otherwise; but, if his sense of measure is offended by the fanaticism of revolution, he does not for all that take the established order of things at its own valuation; it is at best, he is aware, a working compromise based on and reflecting the passions, the prejudices, and the unintelligence of the successive generations by which it has been framed. M. Coignard certainly formed no exaggerated idea of its origin or of its character; his opinion of human capacity and disinterestedness was small. But 'il méprisait les hommes avec tendresse': disillusionment exists without bitterness in those who remember that they are subject to the common lot, and share, in a greater or less degree, the common frailties of men.

It is the fashion to disparage the eighteenth century intellectually, and even more morally; to represent it as an age of 'light without love.' As a fact, it was light rather than love that was wanting to it: its enthusiasm for humanity was unbounded, but its knowledge was defective; the data at its disposal were inadequate to establish the conclusions based upon them. The philosophers of the 'Illumination' remind us in many respects of the early Ionians, Heraclitus, Democritus, and their contemporaries; they anticipated their evidence, and guessed rather than knew. But in

* Les Opinions de M. Jérôme Coignard, 17.

each case the guesses were so happy that it is difficult to put them down as mere shots: the scientific use of the imagination precedes science; and if this use is not always as scientific as could be desired, wisdom is justified of her children; it is through error manifold and various that we enter into the kingdom of truth. The Social Contract never, as a matter of fact, existed, but it served as a lever to overthrow a corrupt and effete society. Natural religion was a figment of philosophers, but it acted as a check upon the extravagances put forward in the name of revealed. The main force of the movement, however, was moral. Conduct is of more account with the generality of men than theory; absolutism perished not because the absolutist idea was absurd, but because absolute rulers made themselves unbearable; the wickedness of churchmen inflicted more injury on religion than did the superstitions of popular belief. The misfortune of the 'Illumination' was that it passed out of the hands of the few into those of the many. Hence revolution, and consequent reaction; the erection of barriers, ephemeral indeed, but mischievous and exasperating, across the natural course of the stream. After so terrible a convulsion as that of '93, reconstruction of some sort was a necessity: the roof, the walls, the very foundations of the social edifice were overthrown. And it was, perhaps, rather the misfortune than the fault of the builders that much of the reconstruction was jerry-built. Their aim was to restore the past. But life is not always to be reckoned by years: the growth of centuries had been crowded into the generation that lay between 1815 and the convocation of the States General; the past could not be restored. Canning was the one statesman of the period who saw this, but he was powerless; the tide set irresistibly the other way. And the theorising of the Restoration was scarcely less mischievous than that of the Revolution. The phantom of Legitimacy replaced that of Liberty as the idol of the theatre and the market-place; the White succeeded the Red Terror; the fallacies of De Maistre, the least Christian if the most Catholic of philosophers, rivalled in reputation and in paradox those of Rousseau. The bow was stretched to the verge of snapping: economic difficulties aggravated political unrest; the Europe of the first half of the century was seething with moral and material discontent. This breakdown of the work of construction showed unmistakably that the analysis of the previous age, so far from being excessive, had not been carried far enough: it was continued in the nation-

alist movement, which, sweeping away the artificial states system galvanised into temporary existence by the diplomacy of the Holy Alliance, made Italy and Germany, in the economics of Lassalle and Marx, in the biology of Darwin, in the theology of Strauss and Baur. Nor is the process within measurable distance of completion: the work that lies before the twentieth century is, in the first instance, critical; the edifice raised prematurely and on unsound foundations by the nineteenth must be cleared away. Construction on a large and lasting scale is reserved for the peaceful reign of some coming Solomon; in an age of strife it can be provisional only. We are

‘ Standing between two worlds, one dead,
The other powerless to be born.’

We must be content, then, with expedients; a *modus vivendi* is all that can be looked for between old and new. In many respects M. France is a child of the ‘Illumination’: he possesses its Voltairian humour, its keen eye for pretence and unreality, its indignation against oppression. What is wanting to him is its hopefulness, its certainty of the future:—

‘ Pour ma part je prends peu d’intérêt à ce qui se fait dans le cabinet du prince, observant que le train de la vie n’en est pas changé, qu’ après les réformes les hommes sont, comme devant, égoïstes, avares, lâches et cruels, tour à tour stupides et furieux, et qu’il s’y trouve toujours un nombre à peu près égal de nouveau-nés, de mariés, de cocus et de pendus, en quoi se manifeste le bel ordre de la société. Cet ordre est stable, monsieur, et rien ne saurait le troubler, car il est fondé sur la misère et l’imbécillité humaine, et se sont là des assises qui ne manqueront jamais. Tout l’édifice en acquiert une solidité qui défie l’effort des plus mauvais princes et de cette foule ignare de magistrats dont il sont assistés.’ *

This is not the spirit of the eighteenth century; the spirit of the eighteenth century was more vigorous and more assured. The optimism of the Encyclopædists, indeed, was premature; their historical sense was undeveloped; they under-estimated the complexity of the subject-matter with which they had to deal. The scientific advance of the last half-century has opened our eyes to this; the world is larger, time vaster, man more ancient, his progress slower, than we supposed. But optimism, modified indeed by knowledge and reflection, yet still optimism, is the conclusion that best accords with and accounts for the facts. The complaint of

* Les Opinions de M. Jé:ô-ne Coignard, 106.

the bankruptcy of science, raised in the interests of party, can have a meaning only for those who have formed an unscientific notion of what science is and what it can perform. If we have supposed that material prosperity of itself ensures moral progress, that improvements in the mechanism of society solve social problems, that the most accurate theological knowledge guarantees a virtuous and religious life, we are, indeed, doomed to disappointment; but the fault lies not with science, but in ourselves. Science will not dispense us from the necessity of effort, of the long restraint and self-mastery by which, and by which only, character is formed. If we want to be taken in and done for at so much a head, to pass in at one end of the machine as raw material and be turned out at the other a finished article, we must go elsewhere. It is quackery, not science, that promises transformations of this sort; no science can think, feel, or act for us; we must think, feel, and act for ourselves. It can show the way; but it is we who must walk in it; and it is we who are bankrupt, not science, if we refuse.

M. France's attitude to religion is ambiguous; a contemporary critic contrasts the piety of his imagination with the impiety of his thought. The judgement passed upon him by the world of religious party will probably be that of M. Mirbeau's aumônier—'Voilà qui est dangereux.' The world of religious party knows, or should know, its business; and from its own standpoint its judgement is most likely correct. It is improbable that M. Anatole France will undertake the pilgrimage *ad limina*, and be received, as M. Brunetière was received, at the Vatican; or that he will lecture at the Cancelleria on Bossuet, and institute a comparison between 'L'Exposée de la Doctrine Catholique' and the encyclicals of Leo XIII. 'Quid Romæ faciam? mentiri nescio,' would perhaps be his answer were the proposal made to him; these things are not in his line. But neither are they necessarily evidences of religion; the interests of religion and those of religious party are not necessarily the same. There is no commoner fallacy than that of equivocation; Latin differs from Teutonic sentiment with regard to religion mainly because by the same name each, the Latin and the Teuton, understands a different thing. To the latter religion means piety, to the former polity; to the one it is personal, and inseparable from conduct—to which it adds an element of emotion and aspiration; to the other it is corporate, standing, if not exclusively, at least first and foremost for submission to the ecclesiastical organisation

which, covering the world with its network, has its centre and focus in Rome.

This is the conception of religion presented in the acute, if unsympathetic, study of Catholicism in France contained in the '*Histoire Contemporaine*.' Its characteristic feature is the substitution of the outward for the inward. An organisation so centralised, so world-wide, so persistent, tends to become an end in itself. The best and wisest men in the Church have fought against this tendency, but it has been too strong for them; authority magnifies its office; historical causes one after another—the breakdown of the Conciliar system in the fifteenth century, the instinct of self-preservation against the encroachments of the civil power, the violent reaction following first on the Reformation and then on the Revolution—all have contributed to the centripetal movement in Latin Christianity, and increased the power and significance of the Papacy. The hostility of Catholicism to science has been exaggerated. A great body moves slowly; Rome, which is not, and has never been, a seat of learning, is frankly not interested in theology, and neither understands nor is tolerant of those who are. But, as a matter of human prudence, she may be trusted not to assume an irreconcilable attitude to the knowledge of the average man; and, as what the scholar knows to-day the average man knows to-morrow, the question between the Church and science resolves itself into one of time. Nor will dogma, in appearance, but in appearance only, so unchanging, stand in the way of this gradual process of accommodation; for Catholics dogma is not so much definite doctrinal teaching as regulation, a matter of ecclesiastical discipline administered by the Pope.* The real peril of the Roman Church is only indirectly intellectual; primarily, as was the case in the Middle Ages, it is religious and moral. It lies in the growing suspicion, manifesting itself with or without reason in the most unexpected quarters, that religion is made a cloak for policy; 'that the Church, instead of being a purely spiritual organisation, is practically a huge political machine worked for mundane ends by worldly-minded men.'

It is possible, no doubt, to distinguish. The Northern conscience is apt to take the institutional side of Catholicism too seriously; to forget that it is conditioned by existing circumstances and subordinate to the ideal. The Curia is

* Harnack, '*History of Dogma*,' i. 1, note.

not the Church; and even in the Church the human is more prominent than the Divine element. The more this is perceived to be so, the more a hard externalism threatens to crush out the life of the spirit, the more instinctively the Christian consciousness falls back, with the mystics, on what after all is the substance of religion—personal spiritual experience, remembering that the King's daughter is glorious, not without, but within. 'L'acte de foi le plus méritoire que puisse faire de nos jours un catholique, c'est de croire que l'Église actuelle renferme l'Église idéale, comme la chrysalide sombre et difforme le gracieux papillon.' But the act is not an easy one, for the generality of men do not draw nice distinctions; they live on the surface of things, and judge by what they see. Hence much of what goes by the name of Anti-clericalism—a movement not, indeed, without its follies and even its crimes, but embodying, in spite of these things, a protest not against what is good in religion, but against what is evil; against the degradation of the religious idea.

Among ourselves the possibility of the revival of mediævalism as more than a passing fashion is so remote that we do not always fairly judge those whose circumstances differ from our own. Catholicism as a religion is one thing: Catholicism as a polity is quite another. And it is under the latter rather than the former aspect that it presents itself in Catholic countries; the outburst of religious and race hatred, hardly yet extinct, of which the Dreyfus case was the expression, serves as an illustration, opportune and not soon to be forgotten, of its character and fruits. Sectarianism there is, a piety which neither elevates the understanding nor enlarges the heart. If piety, in any sense of the word, is scarcely the attribute which we associate with the works of M. Anatole France, at least they possess qualities which are incompatible with piety of this description: 'on y trouvera une parfaite sincérité, beau coup d'indulgence, et quelque naturelle amitié pour le beau et le bien.*' And, Voltairian as he is, one is tempted to forecast for him, as did M. Jérôme Coignard for Catherine, a judgement clearer-sighted and better motived than ours: 'Anatole est ma créature, et je le reconnais aux restes d'une belle lumière qui n'est point éteinte en lui.'

Idealism such as this runs counter, it may seem, to cynicism, however genial; but the union of the two tempers

* La Vie Littéraire, i. préface.

is what is most characteristic in *M. Anatole France*. Hence at once his charm and his truthfulness. For life is woven of no one texture: many moods, many impressions, many standpoints find their place in the varied harmony of the whole. From no one point of view can it be seen in its entirety: '*uno itinere non potest perveniri ad tam grande secretum.*' Optimism, pessimism, idealism, realism—all are partial and relative; each gives one aspect only of the infinite complexity of Nature, we must combine them if we would gain an outlook, however inadequate, over Nature as a whole.

'They see not clearliest who see all things clear.'

Systems are fallacious; it is only by a free employment of sophisms to conceal their deficiencies that systems are formed and impose themselves upon us. No philosophy is more than a way of looking at things, a variable formula expressing certain invariable phenomena; no dogma, no religious conception, represents its object as it is; the nearest the truth are but 'broken lights' of the Infinite, and It is 'more than they.' The heart, then, rightly interrogated, has its standing in these difficult matters as well as the understanding; it may be, indeed, that when the two conflict we do well to trust the former rather than the latter, and—as the poet bids us—

'feel, that we may know.'

'Les vérités découvertes par l'intelligence demeurent stériles. Le cœur est seul capable de féconder les rêves. Il verse la vie dans tout ce qu'il aime. C'est par le sentiment que les semences du bien sont jetées sur le monde. La raison n'a point tant de vertu. . . . Il faut, pour servir les hommes, rejeter toute raison, comme un bagage embarrassant, et s'élever sur les ailes de l'enthousiasme. Si l'on raisonne, on ne s'envolera jamais.' *

* Les Opinions de M. Jérôme Coignard, 288.

ART. XI.—*The Life of Napoleon I.* By JOHN HOLLAND ROSE, M.A. 2 vols., post 8vo. London: George Bell & Sons. 1902.

It may probably be thought that no one is so well suited as an Englishman to write a temperate and calmly reasoned life of Napoleon; it is, we think, certain that no one has hitherto succeeded in accomplishing his task so well as Mr. Rose, whose work is, in many respects, a model of what a historic biography ought to be. He was, indeed, singularly well prepared for undertaking it. Some years since he brought out an excellent little history of the 'Revolutionary' and Napoleonic Era' in the 'Cambridge Historical Series,' and to the 'English Historical Review' he has contributed several important monographs on the period. He has examined a vast amount of printed material, including much of very doubtful value, and has carried his researches into the hitherto little trodden ground of our own Foreign Office records, by means of which he has been able to throw new light on some of the vexed questions of the time. 'Our diplomatic agents,' he says, 'then had the knack of getting at State secrets, even when we were at war with their Governments'; and he rightly considers it discreditable to our ideas of historical research that 'so very few English works are based on the official records of this period.'

The value of these records, which no historian, till now, has taken adequate notice of, is really very great; as an instance of which we may mention the case of a writer of some eminence who, a few years ago, began a study of the Foreign Office papers of 1791-3, with the intention of bringing forth a scathing indictment of the English policy, and ended as a complete convert to the views of Herbert Marsh. This, of course, belongs to an earlier period than that with which Mr. Rose has dealt; but from our own experience we feel justified in saying that, whatever to the discredit of our Government a study of our records may reveal, whatever blundering, ignorance or stupidity it may bring to light, it does, as an almost invariable rule, expose a childlike simplicity and honesty of purpose, and, above all, a desire for peace at the cost of any possible sacrifice. And this marked characteristic of our diplomacy Mr. Rose has brought out in his narrative, not always as one to be praised—more commonly, indeed, as one to be roundly condemned.

It will be readily understood that the true interest of

Mr. Rose's work—that which distinguishes it from all its congeners—lies in the examination and discussions of the course of events, of diplomatic and political struggles, of varying phases of character. We may not always fully agree with the conclusions, but we can rarely help being struck by the clearness of the argument and by the honesty of the judgement. The descriptions of campaigns may be commended, and more especially the admirable use of inset large-scale maps of the country referred to; but the stories of battles are not unfrequently vague and disappointing. The detail of operations at sea does not come within the scope of a 'Life of Napoleon,' but the policy which directed those operations, and formed an intrinsic part of the strategy of the campaign, frequently does; and to this, we are afraid, Mr. Rose has not paid sufficient attention, or has not brought the same competence.

For the rest, the narrative is, on the whole, well put together, and though it frequently offends by an exaggerated and yet intermittent use of the historic present, which seems to set all grammatical canons at defiance, much may be forgiven to a writer whose pages from time to time sparkle with quaint thoughts in a peculiarly happy setting. We cannot arrange them as an exhibition of literary jewelry, but here are a few which may illustrate our meaning: 'An account of Würmser's second attempt [to relieve Mantua] belongs rather to the domain of political fatuity than that of military history'; 'We may doubt whether Bonaparte's posing as the favourite of fortune was not the result of his profound knowledge of the credulity of the vulgar herd, which admires genius and worships bravery, but grovels before persistent good luck'; 'That *bon père de famille*, Louis XVI., whom Nature framed for a farmhouse and Fate tossed into a revolution.' And yet one other, more ambitious, more fully worked out, but not less happy:

'When Austria finally yielded up Marie Louise as an unpicturesque Iphigenia on the marriage altar, she did so only as a desperate device for appeasing an inexorable destiny. And, strange to say, she succeeded. For Alexander took offence at the marriage negotiations; and thus was opened a breach in the Franco Russian alliance which other events were rapidly to widen, until Western and Central Europe hurled themselves against the East and reached Moscow.'

It is of course out of the question to attempt here the shortest outline of Napoleon's career, even if we wished to do so; but an outline of the story would be neither interesting nor useful, and we conceive that we shall better employ the

space at our disposal in an examination of some of the moot points whose interest is revived by the book now before us. And we may say at once, without any undue depreciation of our subject, that we have long thought Napoleon to be in many respects a much over-rated man, and that now, after carefully reading this latest biography, we find our impression strengthened and confirmed. This is not exactly what Mr. Rose has intended; rather, perhaps, the contrary. Just as in life Napoleon exercised an extraordinary influence over those with whom he came in personal contact—an influence which in the present day might almost be called ‘hypnotic suggestion’—the devotion of years to the study of his achievements has produced a similar effect on Mr. Rose, and it is only by an effort that he brings himself back to a calm and historic attitude. Still the effort has been generally—not always—possible, and the result is a connected and critical narrative of a life which—with its attendant conditions—is the most remarkable in modern history. But Napoleon’s fortune in history has resembled that of other distinguished men, and he has been accredited with things of which he was utterly innocent. In imagination, though not perhaps in words, there are many who would assign to him the carrying the boundaries of France to the Rhine and the Alps, the defeat of the first coalition, perhaps even the storming of the Bastille.

Then, too, the rise of Bonaparte to autocratic power is spoken of as wonderful, semi-miraculous, or at least an evidence of stupendous genius. People, ignorant of or untaught by history, do not know, or they forget, that some such rise of a distinguished soldier is the ordinary sequel of a popular convulsion. It was so in Rome when Marius seized the supreme power; and everyone will recollect Byron’s splendid reference to Sulla. It was so even in England, when Cromwell was made Lord Protector. It may be positively asserted that if Bonaparte had remained in Egypt, or been captured by an English frigate in trying to escape, the revolution of Brumaire, or something resembling it, would have come off all the same, and Moreau or some other distinguished soldier would have occupied the place which Bonaparte, being in Paris, secured for himself. The extreme difference in the later histories of Cromwell and Napoleon is to be attributed possibly to the different character of the men themselves, largely to the facts of geography, but most of all to the nature of the people over whom they ruled: the one, a people inured for centuries to freedom of action,

of speech, and of thought; the other, a peasantry long subjected to the most brutal oppression, a peasantry such as Arthur Young has described, sunk in the lowest depths of serfdom and misery, unfit for, incapable of, constitutional government, willing and desirous to be enslaved.

And when, by what we may call the ordinary course of revolutions, Napoleon was raised to the head of affairs in France, he found himself in a position which no European had occupied since the break-up of the Roman Empire—a soldier of superb genius, with the absolute control of the manhood and finances of a vast and powerful country, the irresponsible director of its policy in peace or in war. To us it appears impossible in such circumstances to compare or contrast his military talent with that of Marlborough or Wellington, Turenne or Saxe. Frederick of Prussia, though resembling Napoleon in his independence of direct control, was yet troubled by necessary allies, and could never command such resources of men or money as did Napoleon. And the others—most notably, perhaps, Marlborough and Wellington—through their whole career were struggling against the difficulties forced on them by those whose cause they were upholding. What can be more certain than that Marlborough would have been in Paris in 1705 if he had had freedom from obstruction and independence of command such as took Napoleon to Vienna in 1805? or that Wellington, with the resources of England at his disposal, would have conducted the campaigns in the Peninsula or in Belgium on very different lines from those recorded in history?

As things were, it is impossible to separate the accidents of position from the genius of the man, though we can sometimes please ourselves by pretending to do so, and by pointing out that whilst the two English generals, trammelled by the conditions of their service, were not able to make such grand *coups de théâtre* as Napoleon, never did they make such appalling blunders, even on their own modest scale. It may be that the ever present need of men and transport prevented any rash attempt on the part of Wellington, as the presence of the Dutch commissioners did on the part of Marlborough; but even without that restraint, it is difficult to picture to ourselves either one of them, trained to habits of caution and forethought, plunging into an enemy's country, separated from their bases and exposed to the horrors of a Russian winter, without food, clothing, or shelter. But the fact is that the conditions of Bonaparte's

early campaigns were curiously favourable to him ; he was borne on the crest of fortune's wave to victory and renown, and learned to trust to 'destiny' when others would have preferred trusting to care and judgement. And some such thought has dictated Mr. Rose's closing summary of Napoleon's career :

'Viewing it as a whole, it seems just and fair to assert that the fundamental cause of his overthrow is to be found, not in the failings of the French, for they served him with a fidelity that would wring tears of pity from Rhadamanthus; not in treachery of this or that general or politician, for that is little when set against the loyalty of forty millions of men; but in the character of the man and of his age. Never had mortal man so grand an opportunity of ruling over a chaotic Continent; never had any great leader antagonists so feeble as the rulers who opposed his rush to supremacy. At the dawn of the nineteenth century the old monarchies were effete; insanity reigned in four dynasties, and weak or time-serving counsels swayed the remainder. For several years their counsellors and generals were little better.'

But, in truth, Bonaparte's good fortune went far beyond this; and in reading the story of his achievements it is impossible to avoid being struck with the extraordinary share which it had in his successes. It may, indeed, be said that fortune favours genius, as it favours bravery; but on no other commander whose genius for war may be compared with Bonaparte's has fortune lavished her favours in a similar way. The fact that the generals who commanded against him were weak in their ignorance and obstinate in their senility led to results which sometimes appeared independent of their causes; and as the armies against which he fought were built up of different nationalities, controlled by different interests, and seldom—even to the last—working together with a single-hearted allegiance, it was not always necessary to oppose them by genius to ensure their defeat. Mr. Rose continues :

'It seems a paradox to say that this excess of good fortune largely contributed to his ruin. Yet it is true. His was one of those thick-set, combative natures that need timely restraint if their best qualities are to be nurtured, and their domineering instincts curbed. Just as the strongest Ministry prances on to ruin if the Opposition gives no effective check, so it was with Napoleon. Had he in his early manhood taken to heart the lessons of adversity, would he have ventured at the same time to fight Wellington in Spain and the Russian climate in the heart of the Steppes? Would he have spurned the offers of an advantageous peace made to him from Prague in 1813? Would he have let slip the chance of keeping the "natural frontiers" of

France after Leipzig and her old boundaries when brought to bay in Champagne? Would he have dared the uttermost at all points at Waterloo?'

Passing over the numerous minor instances of good fortune, the fact that Napoleon was almost always opposed by a coalition is perhaps the most noteworthy. And, indeed, the one idea most vividly impressed on us in the study of the whole story is the essential weakness of coalitions. Several years ago, Captain Mahan illustrated this from the naval officer's point of view, though to singularly little purpose if we may judge from the frequent diatribes or jeremiads of self-constituted and irresponsible judges of national policy. Such men are not to be convinced, either by living witnesses or by voices from the dead; but to anyone who can understand and appreciate the teachings of history, the evidence of Napoleon's campaigns ought to be conclusive. The evil wrought by the ambition of the French Emperor was, it might be supposed, sufficient to consolidate his numerous opponents into one firm body; but, under the guidance of Mr. Rose, it is easy to see how the hypothesis works out. Here is one strongly-marked instance at the very beginning of Napoleon's career of victory.

It is story-book reading that he first publicly showed what stuff he was made of in the command of the artillery at Toulon. Mr. Rose considers that his services in this siege have been much exaggerated; were not, in fact, 'so brilliant as to have raised him above the general level of meritorious officers, who were applauded while they prospered, but might be sent to the guillotine for any serious offence.' The force of the conclusion lies in the 'so,' or in the comparative measure of brilliance and offence which might be held to render the guillotine innocuous. That Bonaparte was a capable artillery officer, and that the suggestion for placing the guns was his, have been fully demonstrated by Mr. Spenser Wilkinson in his able little essay, 'Napoleon: the First Phase.'* 'Every experienced officer among besiegers and besieged,' says Mr. Rose, 'saw the weak point of the defence'; but his proof refers solely to the besieged, who were unable to occupy it in force, having only a motley garrison of about 12,000 effective men to defend works which were estimated to require 50,000. The numbers were utterly inadequate, as Mr. Rose

* Owens College Historical Essays. Published subsequently to Mr. Rose's work.

has shown; he has mentioned, too, though only in a casual way, that these 12,000 men were made up of five different nationalities—really six, for of the 1,500 so-called British many were Hanoverians. He has not said that from eight to nine thousand of them were Spaniards or Neapolitans, with little training and no discipline; that Hood, though nominally commander-in-chief, had very little real authority; that he had a bitter quarrel with the Neapolitan commander, and suspected the Spanish admiral of being in treacherous correspondence with Robespierre. This was almost certainly a mistake; but as far as rendering Hood's position more difficult went, it was very real. Against such forces, it did not require much genius to lead overwhelming numbers to victory.

The same fortune attended Bonaparte when he assumed command of the army of Italy, and this quite independent of the incapacity of Beaulieu. Montenotte had been fought and won, and the allies, Sardinians and Austrians, under two different commanders, with two different aims—the defence of Turin and of Milan—had been forced apart without much difficulty. But

‘the French army was so disorganised by rapine as scarcely to have withstood a combined vigorous attack. The republicans, long exposed to hunger and privations, were now revelling in the fertile plains of Piedmont. Large bands of marauders ranged the neighbouring country, and the regiments were often reduced to mere companies. From the grave risks of this situation Bonaparte was rescued by the timidity of the Court of Turin, which signed the armistice eighteen days after the commencement of the campaign. A fortnight later the preliminaries of peace were signed between France and Sardinia, by which the latter yielded up the provinces of Savoy and Nice, and renounced the alliance with Austria. Great indignation was felt in the Imperialist camp at this news, and it was freely stated that the Piedmontese had let themselves be beaten in order to compass a peace that had been tacitly agreed upon in the month of January.’

Or again, in the third coalition, with the possibilities that culminated at Austerlitz pending,

‘neither of the allies was ready in time or sent its full quota. In place of the 54,000 which Alexander had covenanted to send to Austria's support, he sent as yet only 46,000, and of these 8,000 were detached into Podolia in order to watch the warlike moves of the Turks, whom the French had stirred up against the Muscovite.’

And this quite independent of the hesitating policy of Prussia, who first would and then wouldn't, till she was crushed to the earth at Jena and Auerstädt. We might

dwell on the fickle policy of Russia during the following years; her desertion of the allies and her union with France at Tilsit; the friction between the new allies from the very first, for Napoleon, whilst readily agreeing 'to help Russia 'to drive the Turks out of Europe,' made a positive exception of Constantinople.

'This led to a decided difference of opinion between the two Emperors. After one of their discussions, Napoleon stayed poring over a map, and finally exclaimed, "Constantinople! Never! It is the empire of the world." Doubtless it was on this subject that Alexander cherished some secret annoyance. Certain it is that, despite all his professions of devotion to Napoleon, he went back to St. Petersburg ill at ease and possessed with a certain awe of the conqueror.'

And as years went by Russia, though nominally the ally of France, and to some extent enforcing the continental blockade, was in reality intent only on winning Finland, which she finally did under engagements which she has not scrupled to violate; and when that was finished she took the earliest opportunity of breaking the chain which galled her. We might again dwell on what has perhaps been considered one of the most loyal and firm alliances recorded in history—that between the armies of England and Prussia in Belgium in 1815. Does anyone really believe that if the whole force had been under the command of Wellington, or of Blücher, it would have been handled in the disjointed and dangerous manner that it actually was? People talk of the mistakes of the one general or the other; they lose sight of the radical weakness of a combined army, and of the colossal blunder entailed on it by political jealousy—that of having two separate commanders-in-chief. As it was, we have Gneisenau doubting on June 17 whether Wellington would fight, and carrying out an indirect strategy—'because 'he was not sure of Wellington.'

But these are almost trifles when compared with the difficulties that beset the great coalition of 1813-14 that did eventually land Napoleon in Elba. His admirers have very commonly referred to the campaign of 1814 in France as exhibiting perhaps the most striking proof of his extraordinary genius. That it did show genius no one is likely to question; but then, as so often before, his genius was assisted by the discordant aims and wishes of his enemies.

'The alarm of Austria at the growing power of Russia and Prussia was becoming acute. She had drawn the sword only because Napoleon's resentment was more to be feared than Alexander's

ambition. But all had changed since then. The warrior who, five months ago, still had his sword at the throat of Germany, was now being pursued across the dreary flats of Champagne. And his Eastern rival, who then plaintively sued for Austria's aid, now showed a desire to establish Russian control over all the Polish lands, indemnifying Prussia for losses in that quarter by the acquisition of Saxony.'

And again :

'So deep was the Tsar's distrust of the Austrian statesman and commander-in-chief that he resolved to brush aside Metternich's diplomatic pourparlers, to push on rapidly to Paris, and there dictate peace. But it was just this eagerness of the Tsar and the Prussians to reach Paris which kept alive Austrian fears. A complete triumph to their arms would seal the doom of Poland and Saxony; and it has been thought that Schwarzenberg not only sought to save Austrian soldiers by keeping them back, but that at this time he did less than his duty in keeping touch with Blücher. Several times during the ensuing days the charge of treachery was hurled by the Prussians against the Austrians, and once at least by Frederick William himself. But it seems more probable that Metternich and Schwarzenberg held their men back merely for prudential motives until the resumption of the negotiations with France should throw more light on the tangled political jungle through which the allies were groping.'

The result of all this was that Blücher, with 50,000 men marched from Brienne north-west towards Paris, whilst the main army of about three times that number, turned south-west towards Bar-sur-Seine and Sens. It was a chance which Napoleon, with the autocratic command of a homogeneous army, was little likely to miss; the action of the allies in attempting a flank march, with reduced numbers, past a position held by Napoleon was, from a military point of view, suicidal.

'In four days the army of Silesia lost fully 15,000 men, and its corps were driven far asunder by Napoleon's incursion. His brilliant moves and trenchant strokes astonished the world. With less than 30,000 men he had burst into Blücher's line of march, and scattered in flight 50,000 warriors advancing on Paris in full assurance of victory. It was not chance, but science, that gave him these successes. Acting from behind the screen of the Seine, he had thrown his small but undivided force against scattered portions of a superior force.'

Not chance, but science; science, however, aided by the one certain condition of coalitions—that strategical considerations will be subordinate to political. Of the existence of this discord—this rift in the lute—Napoleon was well aware, and, of course, endeavoured to exploit it still further. His marriage had made it easy for him to approach the Austrian Emperor and at this time to urge on him the

impolicy of his continuing the war—‘Why should she subordinate her policy to that of England and to the personal animosities of the Tsar? Why should she see her former Belgian provinces handed over to a Protestant Dutch Prince?’ France would never give up Belgium or the Rhine boundary; otherwise, he (Napoleon) was willing to forget the past, and to make peace on terms that would be agreeable to Austria. And meantime, the pretensions of the Tsar were working in his favour. They ‘excited indignation and alarm.

‘Metternich, Castlereagh, and Hardenberg saw in them a ruse for foisting on France either Bernadotte, or an orientalised republic, or a Muscovite version of the treaty of Tilsit. . . . Alexander was evidently bent on forcing the hands of his allies, and Austria feared that he might, at the end of the war, insist on her taking Alsace as a set-off to the loss of Eastern Galicia, which he wished to absorb. . . . Metternich and Hardenberg signed a secret agreement to prevent the Tsar carrying matters with a high hand at Paris . . . and Austria formally threatened to withdraw her troops from the war unless he limited his aims to the terms propounded by the allies at Châtillon.’

The contention was sufficiently serious, but Napoleon possibly exaggerated it and trusted to his good fortune to blow it into an angry quarrel. And thus his obstinate refusal to treat on the basis of ‘the frontiers of France in ‘1791’ succeeded in forcing the allies to lay their mutual jealousies aside for the moment, and on March 9 the representatives of Great Britain, Russia, Austria, and Prussia signed a compact by which these Powers

‘bound themselves not to treat singly with France for peace, but to continue the war until France was brought back to her old frontiers, and the complete independence of Germany, Holland, Switzerland, and Spain was secured. . . . Undoubtedly this compact was largely the work of Castlereagh, whose tact and calmness had done wonders in healing schisms; but so intimate a union could never have been formed among previously discordant allies but for their overmastering fear of Napoleon.’

From that time forth there were no more opportunities given to him; his attempts to thwart the allies’ plans were everywhere unsuccessful. Slowly but steadily they pushed on, and on March 30 Paris capitulated. On April 6 Napoleon signed his abdication.

In all this there is, of course, nothing new to the student of politics or history; we see it around us from day to day, as we saw it in the curious ‘concert’ of the Powers a few years ago at Crete, or in the still more curious concert in

the Far East. There are plenty of men still living who knew of the friction between the allies in the Russian war nearly fifty years ago, and in the Chinese war which followed it; and everyone who can read ought to know how terribly the same kind of friction hampered our movements through the war of the Spanish Succession not only in Belgium and Germany, but in the Peninsula itself. And yet there are people, generally reputed sane, who seem to devote their lives to hatching scares of impossible coalitions against this country, coalitions with no policy in common, not even with common loves and hates, which are (as we used to learn) the true basis of friendship. What living experience and the facts of history—Napoleonic history more especially—teach us is that a hostile coalition is by no means so dangerous as it appears, and becomes relatively less so as the numbers of its members increase; and on the other hand that allies are even as the staff of a bruised reed, ‘on which if a man lean ‘it will go into his hand and pierce it’; that safety lies in our own exertions rather than in the assistance of myriads of hired confederates.

It is a commonplace of one school of political economy, desirous of showing the absolute evil of every war, that the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars added six hundred millions to our national debt. If, as we believe, the war was a righteous war, which the calls of honour and safety equally compelled us to wage, true political economy teaches that its cost was as necessary a disbursement as to a private individual would be the cost of a fire engine if the flames were spreading to his house. But by far the larger part of the enormous sum named was paid to foreigners to enable them to fight the battles which our most extravagant and wasteful economy had rendered us unable to fight for ourselves. In war, as in civil business, there is much virtue in the old maxim, ‘If you want a thing done, do it yourself’; and this, indeed, was the opinion of Nelson, who wrote from the Riviera in October, 1795:

‘The campaign of our allies, the Austrians and Piedmontese, is, I suppose, almost over—not that I am in the secret when it commenced. My situation with this army has convinced me, by ocular demonstration, of the futility of continental alliances. The conduct of the Court of Vienna is nothing but deception: I am certain, if it appears to that Court to be their interest to make peace with France it will be instantly done. What is Austria better than Prussia, or *vice versâ*? In one respect, perhaps, Prussia may be better than Austria: the moment he got our money he finished the farce; Austria, I fear,

may induce us to give her more, for to a certainty she will not carry on another campaign without more money.'

It must be remembered that Nelson was in the best possible position for gauging the way in which the alliance was practically worked and the value of the return our subsidies received. His view of the matter, therefore, though it has been strangely overlooked—even now by Mr. Rose—may be held to point out one contributory cause of the startling successes of Bonaparte in the campaign of 1796. Another—the age and incompetence of the Austrian generals—has been already referred to. There remains, of course, the genius of Bonaparte, with the interesting question of how far this was to be considered intuitive and how far the result of forethought and study. Intuition may be put aside by everyone who believes that genius is nothing but (*i.e.*, without) the capacity of taking pains; but the forethought and study have been the hotbed of a controversy in which one party has held that the plan of the campaign outlined in 1795, and again in the early months of 1796, was based entirely on Bonaparte's own observation of the ground; whilst others have maintained that in drawing out these plans, and afterwards in the execution of them, he was largely directed and influenced by a careful and detailed study of the history of previous campaigns in the same country, and especially those of 1745-6. M. Moris, who, though not a military man himself, was in direct communication with military men and had a familiar knowledge of the ground, wrote in 1886:

'The two schemes which Bonaparte drew up for 1795 are evidently inspired by the manœuvres of the Prince de Conti in the second part of the campaign of 1741. . . . As to the plan sent in on January 19, 1796, which the young general so skilfully carried out, it is the reproduction of the operations of 1745; . . . and the much vaunted march of Bonaparte from Alessandria to Lodi, including the passage of the Po at Placentia, is an exact repetition of the movements of General de la Vieuville in 1745; the same rapidity in the marches, the same vigour in the engagements.'

It is easy to exaggerate the closeness of analogies; but General Pierron, approaching the subject from the military point of view, wrote in 1889:† 'Napoleon is the pupil of Marshal Maillebois, or rather of his son, the Comte de

* *Opérations militaires dans les Alpes et les Apennins* (1742-1748), p. 9.

† *Comment s'est formé le génie militaire de Napoléon I^{er}* ?

'Maillebois, from whom he borrowed his great principles of 'war'; and supported his opinion not only by the resemblance between the conditions and circumstances of the campaigns, but by showing that as soon as he was appointed to the command of the army of Italy Bonaparte sent in a demand for—amongst other books and maps—the 'Mémoires de Maillebois,' the 'Histoire Militaire du Prince Eugène,' and the 'Campagnes de Vendôme.' General Pierron considers this presumptive evidence that Bonaparte already knew and valued the 'Mémoires de Maillebois,' or, more correctly, the Marquis de Pezay's 'Histoire des Campagnes de Maillebois (1745-6),' and thinks it probable 'that he had studied them, if not earlier, at least in the 'course of 1794 and 1795, when he was deeply engaged 'upon the strategy of the Italian theatre of war.'*

An anonymous writer immediately replied to General Pierron that there was no evidence that the volumes were ever sent to Bonaparte, and still less that he ever received them. This was a fair contention, enormously strengthened, to those who had read Nelson's despatches, by a sentence in his letter to Sir John Jervis, of June 2, 1796:

'I have got the charts of Italy sent by the Directory to Bonaparte; also Maillebois' "Wars in Italy," Vauban's "Attack and Defence of Places," and Prince Eugène's history, all sent for the General. If Bonaparte is ignorant, the Directory, it would appear, wish to instruct him: pray God he may remain ignorant.'

This seemed conclusive against General Pierron's argument. And so the controversy stood for some years; but, writes Mr. Spenser Wilkinson,

'in 1896 I came upon the title of Pezay's book in the catalogue of a Vienna bookshop, with a note that the copy contained an inscription relating to Napoleon. I sent for the copy, and ascertained that it came from the library of a country house in the Southern Tyrol, of which the owner's name was Giambatta Sardagna. It bears on the flyleaf preceding the title-page of volume I. the following inscription: "Fut oublié cet ouvrage par Napoléon Bonaparte, Général en Chef, depuis Empereur des Français et Roi d'Italie, etc., etc., dans la maison de Monsieur Emili, l'an 1796." The inscription is written in a flourishing hand by an inexpert penman, who has had to rule lines to help him—a naïve proceeding little suggestive of forgery, and the price of the book was too small to admit of the hypothesis of a forgery for the purpose of enhancing its value.'

A curious little bit of bibliographical history: M. Emili was *provveditore* at Verona, where Bonaparte had his head-

* Spenser Wilkinson, 'Napoleon: the First Phase.'

quarters for some weeks in the end of 1796. It thus appears definitely settled that Bonaparte had a copy of Pezay's work in 1796, and the value he attached to it is further shown by the fact that another copy formed part of his library at St. Helena. Mr. Wilkinson, however, does not entirely agree with General Pierron's conclusions.

'I can find,' he says, 'no instance in which Bonaparte "copies Maillebois." He found in Pezay's history, and in the documents which accompany it, the details of a series of operations, which he could not follow without acquiring a flood of light upon the strategical conditions of the theatre of war in Northern Italy and upon the weak points of a coalition between Sardinia and Austria. These are the elements of which he makes use in the formation of his own plans, but his designs are governed by his own purposes and adapted to the situation of his own time. Maillebois may well have been his guide to the analysis of the problems which he had to solve, but the solution is in each case his own. . . . In a word, the genius of Napoleon is revealed in the use which he makes of Maillebois.'

This seems a full and fair answer to the question, and is probably what Mr. Rose means, though he does not clearly say so.

Another question, of interest rather than importance, relates to the heavy contributions which were levied on the Lombard States after what may be called their conquest. Mr. Rose attributes the initiative entirely to the Directory and to their despatch of May 7. 'The date,' he says, 'rebutts the statement that Bonaparte suggested to the Directory the pillage of Lombardy.' It may be so; though we see nothing improbable in the supposition that the despatch was based on a previous suggestion by the conqueror. At any rate he at once acted on the order, with a very suspicious readiness, and wrote to the Directory that they might speedily count on six or eight millions being at their disposal, over and above what was needed for the army.

'This,' Mr. Rose says, 'is the first definite suggestion by Bonaparte of that system of bleeding conquered lands for the benefit of the French Exchequer which enabled him speedily to gain power over the Directors. Thenceforth they began to connive at his diplomatic irregularities, and even to urge on his expeditions into wealthy districts, provided that the spoils went to Paris; while the conqueror, on his part, was able tacitly to assume that tone of authority with which the briber treats the bribed.'

If the idea was not Bonaparte's, he made it his own and improved on it as speedily and thoroughly as he did the

other ideas handed down to him by Maillebois ; and, indeed, therein—in the quickness to see, the power to assimilate the ideas of other men—lay a part of the secret of his genius ; the suggestion for good or bad might come from anywhere ; the execution and the result were his own.

In this connection, it is worth pointing out that throughout his life Bonaparte was a voracious reader ; a reader of books of solid interest, history more especially. We have already mentioned some of the volumes—quartos and folios—that he carried about with him in his campaign in Northern Italy. Mr. Wilkinson has given a list of some that he read—and made abstracts of—between 1788 and 1791, which includes Rollin's 'Ancient History,' Raynal's 'Philosophical and Political History of the European Trading Establishments in the Indies,' 'History of England,' 'History of Frederick the Great,' De Tott's 'Memoirs on the Turks and Tartars,' Mably's 'Observations on the History of France,' Necker's 'Report to the States-General on the State of the Finances of France.'

'In 1789 there was a riot at Seurre, and Bonaparte was sent there in command of his company, the captain being away on leave. He took with him Marigny's "*Histoire des Arabes*" and La Houssaie's "*Histoire du Gouvernement de Venise*," and apparently read both works during his two months' duty at Seurre.'

At St. Helena he accumulated 2,700 volumes ; and even on the expedition to Egypt he carried with him a relatively large library ; the actual numbers are not stated, but

'he had with him,' says Mr. Rose, '125 volumes of historical works, among which the translations of Thucydides, Plutarch, Tacitus, and Livy represented the life of the ancient world, while in modern life he concentrated his attention chiefly on the manners and institutions of peoples and the memoirs of great generals, as Turenne, Condé, Luxembourg, Saxe, Marlborough, Eugène, and Charles XII. Of the poets he selected the so-called Ossian, Tasso, Ariosto, Homer, Virgil, and the masterpieces of the French theatre ; but he especially affected the turgid and declamatory style of Ossian. In romance, English literature was strongly represented by forty volumes of novels, of course in translations. Besides a few works on arts and sciences, he also had with him twelve volumes of Barclay's "*Geography*" and three volumes of Cook's "*Voyages*," which show that his thoughts extended to the Antipodes ; and under the heading of politics he included the Bib'e, the Koran, the Vedas, a mythology, and Montesquieu's "*Esprit des Loix*."

And these volumes he did not carry about with him for show or 'pose.' The evidence is that he read and digested

what he read, and could, when occasion served, reproduce either the actions of his great predecessors, or the 'turgid 'declamations' of Ossian. But this Egyptian library was presumably not carried across the desert and up the Nile. Nothing is said of its fate; and we may suppose that the greater part of it was left on board the 'Orient' and perished with her in Aboukir Bay.

At first sight it seems more than curious that Mr. Rose should have written the narrative of the Egyptian campaign without a single reference to the important work of Captain de la Jonquière, which we reviewed last October. But from a later passage it appears that Mr. Rose's first volume, though only now published, was printed off in the spring of last year, before M. de la Jonquière's work was published. The omission was thus unavoidable, but is none the less unfortunate; for much of the detail—as to the voyage—the seizure of Malta—the landing at Alexandria—the detention of the fleet in Aboukir Bay—and other incidents of the campaign—is at variance with what M. de la Jonquière has shown to be the fact. Of the crisis of Brueys' fate, for instance, Mr. Rose says: 'It is somewhat ungenerous to censure him for his decision to remain at Aboukir and risk a fight rather than comply with the dictates of a prudent but inglorious strategy.' We do not think that this rightly describes the cowardly and libellous abuse which Bonaparte and his partisans heaped on the memory of Brueys; but we know now that Bonaparte and Mr. Rose have both misstated the case, and that Brueys would gladly have gone to Corfu if he could; that at first Bonaparte would not allow him to go, and afterwards took care to make his going impossible.

This entire misapprehension of an important episode of the campaign makes us doubly regret that we have not the concluding volumes of M. de la Jonquière's work to check the account of the operations in Syria, as to which Mr. Rose, in the main, follows the beaten track. But he strives to palliate the murder of the 2,500 or more prisoners at Jaffa, on the plea of military necessity. 'The alternative to the massacre was the detaching of a French battalion to conduct their prisoners to Egypt. As that would seriously have weakened the little army, the prisoners were shot.' He entirely loses sight of the facts—most important from the military point of view, and not unimportant from the civil—that these men had laid down their arms on a promise that their lives should be spared,

and that the so-called necessity was not a necessity but a convenience; and we most vehemently protest against the assertion that 'Bonaparte's reluctant assent'—to shoot down, in cold blood and as a mere matter of convenience, some 3,000 unarmed prisoners who had surrendered on promise of quarter—'contrasts favourably with the unhesitating conduct of Cromwell at Drogheda'—in letting loose the fury of the storming-party against the garrison who resisted to the last, and who were, as he and all with him believed, 'barbarous wretches who had imbrued their hands in so much innocent blood.' This was, in truth, a most sad, most terrible incident of the war, but one not antagonistic to the spirit of the age; the other was a brutal massacre, happily unparalleled in modern history. We by no means accept Lanfrey as a sound critic or an impartial judge; but in relation to this affair his narrative seems to us more correct, his argument more sound, and his conclusion more wholesome, than that of Mr. Rose.

As to the repulsive story of the poisoning the plague-stricken patients at Jaffa as the army retired into Egypt, Mr. Rose is beating the air in disproving it. 'It has,' he says, 'been generally believed that the victims of the plague were then and there put out of their miseries by large doses of opium.' No doubt such a story was spread abroad at the time, was firmly believed in the French army, and very naturally by the English. But it has long since been given up, even by the bitterest opponents of Bonapartism; and the story has dwindled down to a statement that with reference to some dozen or so of hopeless cases which they were obliged to leave, Bonaparte suggested such a use of opium to Desgenettes, the surgeon-in-chief, who replied that it was his business to cure men, not to kill them. Napoleon himself, at St. Helena, seems to have admitted the truth of this, and it does not seem out of keeping with the character of the man or the somewhat heathen philosophy which with him stood in lieu of religion.

To us, Englishmen, few, if any, pages of Mr. Rose's book are more deeply interesting than those in which he tells of the negotiations which preceded the treaty of Amiens and continued through the peace, ending only with the renewal of the war in 1803. Perhaps no incident of the whole period has been so often and so angrily discussed as this last; and it has long been clear, even to those who held that it was unavoidable, that it was so from the beginning; that the

terms of the treaty were such as, in the hands of an unscrupulous opponent, could not but lead to misunderstanding and quarrel. Mr. Rose considers—rightly, we think—that this was due to the weakness of our Government, which, in its desire for peace, allowed itself to be duped and submitted to be bullied into concessions disastrous to our interests. But though he points out the advantage which, in such negotiations, an autocrat had over the ministers of a constitutional government controlled by public opinion, he does not seem to lay sufficient stress on the necessity our ministers were then under to make peace; on the fact that the country was sick of the war, and believed that peace was possible. A strong Government would have sooner found out that it was not possible, and have undeceived the country in a less costly manner; but Addington's was not a strong Government, either collectively or individually.

Curiously, in trying to emphasise this, Mr. Rose says: 'It was remarked as significant of the new docility of George III., that the empty title of "King of France" which he and his predecessors had affected, was now formally resigned, and the *fleurs de lys* ceased to appear on the royal arms.' If this is taken to imply that the resignation was connected with the treaty, it is entirely wrong; the 'empty title' and the *fleurs de lys* were dropped at the union with Ireland, when the King took the title 'Georgius tertius, Dei Gratia Britanniarum rex, fidei defensor,' a fact that was strangely ignored in the recent discussions on the title of his present Majesty. But though the change does not illustrate the weakness of Addington or his Government, it was indirectly due to the general desire for peace. On this point, the contemporary account, well-informed though non-official, is clear:

'The Executive Directory, feeble and justly contemned, had during the negotiation at Lisle insisted on the renunciation, and there was no probability that the Consular Government, more fortunate and respected and apparently more firm, would in any future treaty omit to make a similar requisition. The nation, desirous of peace, would hardly endure to hear of a protracted war for the sake of a mere title; and ministers, aware of this fact, acted discreetly in yielding to the evident temper of the times, and making, by their own choice, a change which might otherwise have been extorted on the demand of the enemy, reinforced by the clamour of the people.' *

It has been, and still is, so often alleged that the war

* Annual Register, 1801, pt. i., p. 38.

broke out again because the English Government, in violation of the treaty, refused to give up Malta, that it is worth while to pause for a few minutes on the consideration of what really took place. The evacuation of Malta—that is, the handing it over to a reconstituted Order of St. John under the guarantee of a third Power—was one, but only one, of the terms of the treaty, which, ever since its conclusion, Bonaparte had been insolently violating in almost every other point. He had annexed Holland, Switzerland, and Piedmont, and had denied the right of the English Government to interfere; it was not explicitly stated that he was not to do so, and was therefore no business of theirs. He had not only refused to make a commercial treaty with England, but had ordered a commercial blockade by all the States under his influence; and, in reply to complaints, demanded the immediate evacuation of Malta. Addington had repeatedly professed his desire to yield even this, subject to the conditions named; but the Order was not reconstituted; its property and houses in France, in Italy, and in Spain were seized; and no third Power was found to give a guarantee. Russia refused, and recommended England to keep the place; and though Addington was himself willing to give up anything for the sake of the peace, public opinion in England was rapidly changing in favour of putting a term to the aggressions of Bonaparte, accompanied, as they were, by an insolence of language and demeanour of which Mr. Rose's narrative gives but a feeble idea. For a correct impression it is necessary to turn to the more outspoken pages of Lanfrey.

Thus, sorely against his will, Addington was compelled to send to Bonaparte what was virtually an ultimatum. He demanded the evacuation of the Batavian Republic and of Switzerland, an indemnity for the King of Sardinia, the cession of Lampedusa, and an acknowledgement of England's right to occupy Malta for ten years. On these conditions he would recognise the kingdom of Etruria and the Cisalpine republic.

The change of tone inverted the positions of the two parties. Bonaparte had so often found blustering insolence triumphant on the Continent, and hitherto also in his negotiations with England, that he had pushed forward to a position from which one or the other must give way or fight. It is probable, as Mr. Rose thinks, that he did not wish to fight just then. By negotiation, and by the stupidity or weakness of our Government he had recovered all the colonies

that France or her dependencies had lost during the war; and now, with his Empire swollen on the Continent, and largely increased beyond the seas, he wanted time to consolidate it and to strengthen his navy for its defence. But his character, always headstrong, and impaired by a long course of easy good fortune and by want of resistance, could not endure contradiction, nor could his political position, not yet confirmed, permit any apparent drawing back. He was obliged to accept the war which he had forced England to declare; and in doing so showed his extreme annoyance in a petulant breach of international law and international courtesy which did England, as his enemy, no harm, but inflicted much misery and suffering on thousands of private families.

‘On May 22, 1803, appeared at Paris the startling order that, as British frigates had captured two French merchantmen on the Breton coast, all Englishmen between eighteen and sixty years of age who were in France should be detained as prisoners of war. The pretext for this unheard-of action, which condemned some 10,000 Britons to prolonged detention, was that the two French ships were seized prior to the declaration of war. This is false: they were seized on May 20—that is, four days after the British Government had declared war, three days after an embargo had been laid on British vessels in French ports, and seven days after the First Consul had directed his envoy at Florence to lay an embargo on English ships in the ports of Tuscany. It is therefore obvious that Napoleon’s barbarous decree merely marked his disappointment at the failure of his efforts to gain time and to deal the first stroke.’

In this way began the war which was immediately to develop Bonaparte’s long conceived design for the invasion of England, and to be met by the rigorous blockade of all French ports, the first phase of which ended at Trafalgar, the second on the quarter-deck of the ‘Bellerophon.’

The renewal of the war put an immediate end to Bonaparte’s schemes of colonial expansion. A great deal has been said of his ambition to found a vast Eastern Empire, to rival Alexander on his own ground; and Mr. Rose repeatedly speaks of this as largely, if not mainly, influencing his conduct. It seems to us quite as likely that it was merely a daydream in which it pleased him to indulge, but that his real aim was colonial expansion, and that in that lay the secret of his persistent hostility to England. ‘He sought,’ according to Mr. Rose, ‘to humble England, so that he might be free for his long-deferred Oriental enterprise’; but though there can be little doubt that the idea of India had for him a strange fascination, its

political interpretation seems to belong to the second aim just referred to rather than to the first. To it, however, and to all efforts in that direction, England was bound to offer a strenuous opposition, and Mr. Rose has pointed out that

‘the consolidation of British power in Hindostan would in all probability never have occurred but for the apprehensions excited by the French demands [for the extension of the French districts in India]. The Marquis Wellesley could not have pursued his daring and expensive schemes of conquest, annexation, and forced alliances had not the schemes of the First Consul weakened the protests of the dividend-hunters of Leadenhall Street.’

But England was equally bound to resist any interference with her colonies, and some at least of our possessions—Tasmania, for instance, then, as in after years the South Island of New Zealand—owe their settlement to the desire—if we ought not to say to the necessity—of anticipating a French encroachment. To a peaceful expansion of France beyond the seas—though she had no experience of such—England might not have objected; and an honourable and honest peace might have allowed Bonaparte to attempt the founding colonies, which in all probability could not have been sustained in any case, but certainly could not have been sustained without the continued good will and assistance of England.

A proof of that occurred even during the short peace. He was presumably meditating on the possibility of founding a colony and establishing the French dominion, then or later on, in the South of Australia, and sent out an exploring ship, the ‘*Géographe*,’ to examine the coast, which she did from Wilson Promontory to Cape Leeuwin—ignorant of the fact that it had already been roughly surveyed by Grant and Flinders—and named some of the more striking features, among others Spencer Gulf as *Golfe Bonaparte*, St. Vincent Gulf as *Golfe Josephine*, and Kangaroo Island as *Isle Decrès*. There seems, however, to have been no apprehension or jealousy of a French settlement, and when the ‘*Géographe*’ came to Sydney, with all her men down with scurvy, the few cattle in the colony, though intended solely for stock, were at once slaughtered for the benefit of the strangers. Had the peace continued, a settlement might have been attempted; had it been honest, the settlement might have been allowed; but the war put an end to the scheme for the time and for ever. That it remained in Bonaparte’s mind as a possibility of the future seems to be clearly

indicated by the official publication in 1807 of a map of Australia, in which the name 'Terre Napoléon' extends over the southern part of what is now Victoria and South Australia.

Another colonial scheme, of better geographical possibilities, referred to the continent of North America. In 1800, by a secret treaty with Spain, and in return for what proved a very nominal cession of Tuscany, France had acquired certain provisional rights over Louisiana, a vast territory comprising vaguely the country at the mouth of the Mississippi, and to the west and north as far as the Missouri or farther. In 1802 these rights became real, but the United States at once interfered. Public feeling there was strongly opposed to the French occupation, and 'despite his predilections for France,' Jefferson was compelled to forbid it. He accordingly sent Monroe to Paris with instructions 'to effect a compromise, or even to buy outright the French claims on that land.' Bonaparte yielded, and eventually sold the French claims to the States for sixty million francs. Mr. Rose puts it that 'he abandoned his Mississippi enterprise in favour of the Oriental schemes which were closer to his heart.'

As we have already said, we do not feel quite so sure about these Oriental schemes as Mr. Rose does, and think that Bonaparte's yielding was more probably in the interests of the struggle with England which he, better than anyone else, then knew must speedily recommence. If he now quarrelled with the United States, an alliance between them and England might result, with certain disaster to the newly regained French interests in the West Indies. It is possible that he was speaking his mind and not merely posing when he said: 'This accession of territory strengthens for ever the power of the United States, and I have just given to England a maritime rival that sooner or later will humble her pride'; or, again, 'I know the price of what I abandon. I have proved the importance I attach to this province. I renounce it with the greatest regret; to attempt obstinately to retain it would be folly.'

To his brothers, however, the bargain was still more distasteful. Joseph had been the chief instrument in negotiating the treaty of Amiens; Lucien, in conducting the negotiation with Spain; and both of them were indignant at seeing their work undone for the sake of what appeared to them a mere whim. The resistance or hostility of the United States seemed preferable to aggressive

policy and unending war in Europe. The two sought their brother.

'He chanced to be in his bath—a warm bath, perfumed with scent, where he believed that tired nature most readily found recovery. He ordered them to be admitted, and an interesting family discussion was the result. On his mentioning the proposed sale, Lucien retorted that the Legislature would never consent to the sacrifice. The mention of the consent of the deputies roused the spleen of the autocrat, who, from amidst the scented water, mockingly bade his brother go into mourning for the affair, which he, and he alone, intended to carry out. This gibe led Joseph to threaten that he would mount the tribune in the Chambers, and head the opposition to this unpatriotic surrender. Defiance flashed forth once more from the bath; and the First Consul finally ended their bitter retorts by spasmodically rising, as suddenly falling backwards, and drenching Joseph to the skin. His peals of scornful laughter and the swooning of the valet, who was not yet fully inured to these family scenes, interrupted the argument of the piece; but when resumed a little later Lucien wound up by declaring that if he were not his brother he would be his enemy. "My enemy!" exclaimed Napoleon; "you my enemy! I would break you—see—like this box"—and he dashed his snuff-box on the carpet. It did not break, but the portrait of Josephine was detached and broken. Whereupon Lucien picked up the pieces and handed them to his brother, remarking, "It's a pity. Meanwhile, until you can break me, it is your wife's portrait that you have broken.'

The first essential for a war against England was a strong fleet, as, indeed, Bonaparte had written in the spring of 1798; without that nothing could be done. But his want of temper and judgement, by forcing on the declaration of war, had prevented his increasing the French navy as he wished, and once again it became an object to add the Spanish navy to it. Out of this need came the pressure on Spain and the determination to force her into an active alliance. The English Government, however, was forewarned, and endeavoured to prevent the alliance from having effect by seizing the Spanish treasure ships and holding them as a material guarantee. The seizure, accompanied as it was by a sharp fight and the appalling destruction of one of the Spanish ships, was vehemently denounced as an act of piracy by all the enemies of England abroad and of the English Government at home. In reality it was a perfectly lawful and judicious action, and even the Spanish historian Couto, cited by Captain Mahan, can only say :

'The mere detention of the division from America, carrying specie which might be used in behalf of French preparations, could have been overlooked as an able and not very illegal means of bettering the

prospects of the English reclamations in consequence of the scanty satisfaction they obtained from our Court. . . . If all the circumstances are impartially weighed . . . we shall see that all the charges made against England for the seizure of the frigates may be reduced simply to want of proper foresight in the strength of the force detailed to effect it.' *

To this Mr. Rose adds, apparently meaning to shift the blame from the shoulders of the Admiralty: 'In the Admiralty Secret Letters I have found the instructions to Sir John Orde, with [five ships of the line, a frigate] and two sloops, to seize the treasure ships. No fight seems to have been expected.' No fight would have been possible had any such force been in the way. Unfortunately for the implied argument, the instructions to Orde are addressed to him at Spithead, where the ships named were lying, and are dated 'October 27'—twenty-two days after the treasure ships were seized by frigates acting—as Mr. Rose might have read in Captain Mahan's pages—under orders from Cornwallis. And yet the 'want of proper foresight' to which Couto refers was rather an unfortunate accident than a blunder. The Admiralty knew that treasure ships were expected, but had no clear intelligence what they were or where they were coming to. A large number of ships—ships of the line and frigates—were accordingly detached to look out for them—off Cadiz, off Cape Finisterre, off Corunna, and other places. It was Graham Moore's luck to fall in with them when he had a sufficient force; but he might easily have had only two ships, instead of four, and the fight would have been the more cruel, though the result would—in all probability—have been essentially the same.

A somewhat similar incident which, being on a much larger scale, has been more often and more angrily discussed, was the bombardment of Copenhagen and the seizure of the Danish navy in 1807. The discussion has been the more angry because it had nothing to go on. For all that was known the attack on Denmark might be, as—by the pro-Gallic and sentimental party it was alleged to be—an insolent and cowardly display of brute force, without any valid reason; and though the counter-allegation was that the Government had certain information that, by a secret article of the treaty of Tilsit, Denmark was to be compelled to put her fleet at the disposal of Napoleon, there was no evidence

* Influence of Sea Power upon the French Revolution and Empire, ii. 139.

to show how they got the information, or, indeed, that it was anything more than mere suspicion.

It has, of course, long been known that there were secret articles, and that the general sense of one of them was as has been stated, though the actual text was not revealed till about twelve years ago; but how the Government obtained the immediate knowledge of it has remained a mystery. What has always seemed a plausible guess is that they bought it from Talleyrand for a million sterling; but even on the supposition that Talleyrand was sufficiently greedy of money and unscrupulous as to the means of getting it, it is merely a guess, without anything that can be called proof to substantiate it. Mr. Rose thinks that his researches furnish a solution of the mystery. He says:

‘Our Foreign Office records show that our agent at Tilsit, Mr. Mackenzie, who was on confidential terms with General Bennigsen, left post haste for England immediately after the first imperial interview; and the news which he brought, together with reports of the threatening moves of the French on Holstein, clinched the determination of our Government to checkmate the Franco-Russian aims by bringing strong pressure to bear on Denmark.’

We cannot agree that this is by any means a solution of the mystery. Before the meeting of the emperors Mackenzie wrote from Memel giving such information as he had gleaned; and no doubt this, together with the news from Copenhagen and Holstein, was calculated to arouse grave suspicions. But on such suspicions alone the Government could not have acted with the promptitude and decision it did; and Mr. Rose’s story does not supply the necessary addition. He shows, indeed, that Mackenzie left Memel ‘immediately after the first imperial interview’ on June 25, and suggests that the further information he brought was definite and what was wanted to enable the Government to act. To us this seems in the highest degree improbable. Mr. Rose himself, indeed, supplies the contradiction to it:

“I hate the English as much as you do, and I will second you in all your actions against them.” Such are said to have been the words with which Alexander greeted Napoleon as they stepped on to the raft. Whereupon the conqueror replied, “In that case all can be arranged, and peace is made.” As the two emperors were unaccompanied at that first interview it is difficult to see on what evidence this story rests. It is most unlikely that either emperor would divulge the remarks of the other on that occasion, and the words attributed to Alexander seem highly impolitic. . . . Besides, we know for certain that he was most anxious to postpone his rupture with England for some months.’

According to Mr. Rose's own argument there was thus no information to bring, and, if there had been any, Mackenzie could not have known it. The suggestion that he or any agent of his was concealed on the raft, within earshot of the speakers, is palpably absurd, and as such Mr. Rose rejects it. He thinks that Mackenzie may have been told by Bennigsen; but Bennigsen could not know more than Mackenzie did, though he supposed a good deal, and in any case there is nothing to show that Mackenzie was on those 'confidential terms' with Bennigsen which form an essential part of Mr. Rose's hypothesis. He has himself shown that he was a stranger to Bennigsen till a few days before: he had brought a letter of introduction, and Bennigsen asked him to dinner. Surely this very ordinary courtesy does not speak of confidential terms such as would lead a man in Bennigsen's position to speak of and discuss his master's secret policy with a foreigner. And thus, rejecting Mr. Rose's solution, the mystery remains for the present very much where it was. It is possible that the key to it was buried with Talleyrand; it is possible that it lies hid in the cynical maxim, '*Cherchez la femme!*' it is perhaps not impossible, though we can scarcely think it probable, that, after all, our Government argued from things known to things unknown, and acted on its suspicions. Its record does not seem to warrant our attributing to it such a degree of intelligence.

Mr. Rose, however, establishes the fact that our Government hoped for a peaceful and friendly settlement with Denmark, and proposed a defensive alliance, a subsidy of 100,000*l.*, and armed assistance in case she should be attacked by France: if the offer was refused, it was still hoped that the threat of an overpowering force would prevent any resistance, but in any case the fleet must go to England. As Denmark refused the alliance, and would not yield to a threat, force had to be used; the fleet went to England, and Denmark 'kept up hostilities against us for 'nearly seven years.' And 'all that resulted from Canning's 'action was the hatred of a brave people and the possession 'of their fleet.' This is not quite correct: it was not only that we possessed their fleet, but that the Danes did not. The fleet to us was useless, and few, if any, of the ships went to sea in our service; but in Danish hands, and acting under the orders of Napoleon, it might, and probably would, have done us much harm. Without 'Canning's action' the hostility of Denmark was quite certain; with it, there was at least a chance of a friendly settlement, and a positive

assurance that, if there must be hostilities, they would be innocuous.

From that time on, England's direct part in the struggle lay entirely at sea and in the peninsula, and with neither of these was Napoleon personally concerned; and the question which really dominated Europe, which underlay all the diplomatic contentions and caused the never-ending war, was the 'Continental System.' But as to the continental Powers, its operation was passive, social, financial: it does not readily lend itself to descriptive narrative, and does not fill such a large part of Mr. Rose's canvas as its importance deserves. This was perhaps a necessity; but the result is that a reader, approaching the subject for the first time, would scarcely gather from his pages the absorbing interest of that remarkable phase of the war—the land against the sea.

It is quite true that Mr. Rose describes the action of the Berlin and Milan Decrees and of the Orders in Council, and Napoleon's fixed determination to enforce his will. He writes of 'the deepening hardships entailed on Germany,' and of the war with Austria and the butchery of Aspern-Essling as 'the outcome solely of the Continental System'; of the King of Holland, flying from his country in July, 1810, sooner than bring on his subjects 'the ruin into which 'the rigid application of the Continental System was certain 'to plunge them'; of how, in February, 1811, Napoleon 'bade Sweden enforce the Continental System under pain 'of the occupation of Swedish Pomerania'; and of how, in January, 1812, 'he carried out his threat, thereby throwing 'Sweden into the arms of Russia.' He tells also how, towards the close of 1810, the Tsar

'declined to admit land-borne goods on the easy terms arranged at Tilsit, but levied heavy dues on them, especially on the *articles de luxe* that mostly hailed from France. Some such step,' he says, 'was inevitable. Unable to export freely to England, Russia had not money enough to buy costly French goods without disordering the exchange and ruining her credit. While seeking to raise revenue on French manufactures the Tsar resolved to admit on easy terms all colonial goods, especially American. English goods he would shut out as heretofore; and he claimed that this new departure was well within the limits of the treaty of Tilsit. Far different was Napoleon's view. . . . On April 2 (1812) he wrote: "If Alexander does not quickly stop the impetus which has been given, he will be carried away by it next year, and thus war will take place in spite of him, *in spite of me*, in spite of the interests of France and Russia. . . . It is an operative scene of which the English are the shifters." What madness,' adds Mr. Rose, 'as if Russia's craving for colonial wares and solvency were a device of the diabolical islanders.'

This is all very good, and, so presented, seems sufficient; but in the book it is lost amid a crowd of political and diplomatic matter of secondary importance, so that the impression remains that, for instance, the war with Russia grew out of Napoleon's annexation of the Duchy of Oldenburg—a necessity, indeed, of the Continental System—rather than out of the Continental System itself; although he does say definitely: 'It suited the French Emperor to aver that the quarrel was about Poland rather than the 'Continental System,' as, in fact, it gained him 'the ardent support of the Poles'; and in a note he adds: 'Napoleon admitted to De Pradt, his envoy at Warsaw, that Russia's lapse from the Continental System was the chief cause of the war: "Without Russia the Continental System is an "absurdity."'

And so the war began, with, on the part of Napoleon, a display of imposing force by which he sought to overawe his Eastern rival.

'Lord of a dominion that far excelled that of the Tsar in material resources, suzerain of seven kingdoms and thirty principalities, he called his allies and vassals about him at Dresden, and gave to the world the last vision of that imperial splendour which dazzled the imagination of men . . . It was as if Peter the Hermit had arisen to impel the peoples of Western and Central Europe once more against the immobile East. Frenchmen to the number of 200,000 formed the kernel of this vast body; 147,000 Germans from the Confederation of the Rhine followed the new Charlemagne; nearly 80,000 Italians under Eugène formed an Army of Observation; 60,000 Poles stepped eagerly forth to wrest their nation's liberty from the Muscovite grasp; and Illyrians, Swiss, and Dutch, along with a few Spaniards and Portuguese, swelled the grand army to a total of 600,000 men.'

The rest of the story is one of the most terrible and impressive in modern history. Of the 600,000 men—men in the full vigour of early manhood—who crossed the Niemen in the latter days of June, 1812, only 20,000, and those

'famished, frosthitten, unarmed spectres, staggered across the bridge of Kovno in the middle of December. . . . The remainder of that mighty host rotted away in Russian prisons, or lay at rest under Nature's winding-sheet of snow.'

Brilliant as many of Bonaparte's actions had been, astounding as had been some of his successes, beneficent as had been some of his legislation, we are entitled to doubt whether the name of a great statesman or a great soldier is rightly applied to a man who, having autocratic power and being solely responsible for the policy of the war and the strategy of the campaign, took unreasoning hatred for the

guide of his conduct, forced on the quarrel with Russia on grounds which every economist or financier must condemn, and led his army into an unknown country, trusting blindly to the 'star of destiny,' and without taking thought of, or making provision for, their food, their clothing, their shelter, or their retreat. We might emphasise this by dwelling on the fact that what he did in Russia, in defiance of all canons of the military art, he had done, years before, in Egypt, where, happily for his men, the climate was less severe and the enemy less unrelenting; or that he would have sinned in exactly the same manner in England, had not the good fortune of which he boasted rendered his design abortive. The Russian campaign was no solitary instance of the limitations of his genius, but it was on such a gigantic scale that every other is dwarfed beside it. And it was sufficient. The rest followed as inexorably as night follows day. His splendid talents could not save him from the punishment which Nature awards to those who persistently sin against her laws, and the results were Leipzig and Elba, Waterloo and St. Helena.

The concluding pages of Mr. Rose's book, which deal with Napoleon's life in his island prison, will be read with more especial interest at the present time as they traverse—in our opinion, correctly—the judgement on the conduct of our Government and of Sir Hudson Lowe which Lord Rosebery's brilliant little volume has recently brought into prominence. It is a story of detail which—as well as the author's chapter in the 'Owens College Essays'—should be studied as a careful and honest justification of Lowe, who was appointed to the very unenviable post because he was known to be an upright and courteous gentleman, an officer of unswerving integrity, and a good linguist. Mr. Rose produces convincing evidence that every discomfort in Bonaparte's position—except, of course, his detention in the island—was due to his own insolent conduct and his repeated attempts at evasion; that he and his Staff deliberately tried to make Lowe's situation intolerable, and scattered complaints and calumnies broadcast, in the hope that some would stick—as Lord Rosebery has shown they have. The lies continued even after Bonaparte's death. It was formally stated that he died of disease of the liver, brought on by confinement, the inclement climate (of a sub-tropical island), and the want of proper food (supplied at his direction at a cost of 12,000*l.* a year). The autopsy showed that he died, as his father had died, of cancer in the stomach—painful, but neither romantic nor heroic.

- ART. XII.—1. *Speeches of the Earl of Rosebery at Liverpool (February 14 and 15, 1902) and at Glasgow (March 12, 1902).*
2. *Speech of the Duke of Devonshire to the Liberal Unionist Council, February 27, 1902.*
3. *Speech of the Right Hon. John Morley, M.P., at Manchester, March 12, 1902.*

WHATEVER may have been the intention of Lord Rosebery in again entering the arena of active politics, neither that statesman himself, nor anyone else, can pretend to think that his intervention has as yet tended in the smallest degree to the consolidation of the forces of the Opposition either in Parliament or the country. The Liberal Party, if the heterogeneous crowd of members on the Speaker's left hand is still to be allowed to claim that honoured name, was never less harmonious within itself than at the present moment—never less able to take common action in opposition to Ministers of the Crown. In the country the confusion within the party appears to be hardly less than in the House of Commons, and Liberals find it necessary to form and to join special political combinations, not for the purpose of furthering the general cause of the party, but in order to accentuate sectional views notoriously distasteful to other powerful bodies amongst their brother Liberals.

Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman holds a definite position as the Leader of the Liberal Party in the House of Commons. He was chosen for that position by the Parliamentary representatives of the Liberal electorate of Great Britain, and only last year he received a unanimous vote of confidence from a meeting of the Parliamentary party at the Reform Club. It may be said, moreover, that there is certainly at the present time no ex-Minister in the House of Commons who could command anything like so large a following. When, therefore, Lord Rosebery comes forward with the avowed intention of recasting the recent principles and methods of 'Liberalism,' when in letters and in speeches he declares that a formal meeting of the Liberal Parliamentary party is an organised hypocrisy and that the establishment of an Irish Parliament is not an end at which patriotic statesmanship can aim, and when he invites that party to make an altogether fresh start with an altogether clean slate, the Liberal Leader is at least clearly within his rights in asking Lord Rosebery to declare whether it is as a Liberal addressing Liberals that he reappears in the field of politics.

or whether his patriotic instincts have not led him to look for his country's welfare in the substitution of some new and better political combination for Mr. Gladstone's 'great instrument.' The Liberal Leader may think that Lord Rosebery has become a Liberal Unionist, or worse—if, indeed, that be possible! 'Comes he in peace here, or comes he in war?' is, at all events, the very natural and pertinent inquiry which on the part of his Liberal followers Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman ventures to put to the late Prime Minister. Whether in truth the intentions of that statesman are peaceful or warlike is not thoroughly cleared up by his vehement letter to the 'Times' of February 21 last, declaring that he is, in any case, not within Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman's 'tabernacle,' and that he (Sir Henry) has no right to give himself 'Pontifical' airs. Sir Henry has shown himself 'honest and well-meaning in his devotion to the Liberal Party,' and he (Lord Rosebery) only wishes 'he could have shared his labours and supported his policy.'

It is quite unnecessary, after the ample discussion of which Lord Rosebery's speeches have been the subject, to examine minutely his several deliverances at Chesterfield, at Liverpool, and at Glasgow. As to the first, we held three months ago that it in no degree affected the then political situation. It afforded, in reality, no new rallying-ground for distracted Liberalism, nor did it communicate any enthusiasm or zeal to a disheartened Opposition. In these respects the later speeches have not accomplished more than the first; and the party situation at the present moment remains entirely unaffected by Lord Rosebery's recent activities. It is, however, very conceivable that Lord Rosebery's thoughts have been bent, not so much upon the immediate present as on some future period, not perhaps in truth very distant, when circumstances may have greatly modified the political situation.

When, in 1879, Mr. Gladstone returned to active politics from his voluntary retirement, he left no doubt in the public mind as to his intentions. His burning enthusiasm stirred the whole country as it had rarely been stirred before. He appealed to the country, but he appealed to it through the Liberal Party, urging on every platform as the first necessity the overthrow of Lord Beaconsfield's Government. His speeches in Midlothian covered the whole field of politics. He united and inspired Liberals of almost every shade of Liberalism, and he led them to victory. That is one way in which a minority may be turned into a majority, an Opposition into a Government.

Lord Rosebery is far too clever a man to suppose that it was for him in 1902 to follow in the footsteps of the Mr. Gladstone of 1879-80. The situation to-day is an entirely different one. Moreover, Lord Rosebery stands alone, and no one can safely predict with what colleagues or with what following he proposes to associate himself. We agree with the Duke of Devonshire that this sort of direct personal appeal to the public at large is without precedent. In this country we have no Presidential election ; and if we had, a candidate for the Presidency would require to obtain the support of powerful and responsible persons and bodies before he could be nominated with the very least prospect of success. In Parliament Lord Rosebery, though possessing many personal friends, has no party, certainly no fighting party, behind him. According to ordinary British methods, Lord Rosebery's friends in either House might be expected to formulate his policy in Parliament, and to support it vigorously, if need be, in the constituencies. In this very curious campaign of the late Prime Minister two considerable factors in British politics have as yet been ignored, viz. Parliament and the electorate. Newspaper support is doubtless a valuable adjunct in political warfare, but the Press is not the people, and it is very easy to over-estimate the public support indicated by crowded meetings.

It is worth while to consider Lord Rosebery's position towards the various political parties in the State. To us he seems to have been quite explicit from the beginning in declaring that the mere reconstruction of the Liberal Party was not his object. At Glasgow he complained that Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman should have supposed the Chesterfield speech was addressed to the Liberal Party. 'I ' there spoke to the public at large, and only incidentally to ' the Liberal Party ' were his words at Glasgow. This tone towards the party he once led has characterised all his utterances, and the tone is in thorough accord with the line of party policy which he is pursuing. The Liberal or Home Rule Party throughout the country is doubtless at a low ebb in its fortunes, and the Opposition which represents it in the House of Commons has never been weaker or more disunited than at present, but to 'reconstruct' this Opposition on the basis of breaking up the alliance with Irish Home Rulers, of quarrelling with the Welsh Disestablishers, and the English advanced Radicals, would be to 'pulverise' the fragments that still remain of a once noble edifice. Lord Rosebery has now abandoned Home Rule,

we do not for a moment doubt with perfect sincerity. His views and his language have become almost identical with those of Mr. John Bright and other Liberal Unionists half a generation ago. But it is for holding these opinions that Liberal Unionists have been denounced by Lord Rosebery and his friends as 'dissentients' and 'traitors' to that great party which we used to be told had never failed to carry into effect any political principle to which it had once given its adherence.

Now the Front Opposition Bench in the House of Commons is occupied by men who, however much they may differ upon many matters, have agreed in one thing. They have held for fifteen years the Home Rule faith. This was their bond of union. This it was that differentiated them from Unionists, Liberal or Conservative. The establishment of a separate National Parliament in Ireland, with an Executive Government dependent upon it, was, they told us, the first and supreme object of all 'Liberals.' It was only because in this sense Lord Rosebery was a 'Liberal' that he became Mr. Gladstone's Foreign Secretary in 1886 and 1893, and that he succeeded that statesman as Prime Minister in 1894. So Mr. Asquith, who first entered Parliament by turning out as strong a Liberal as himself, solely upon the merits of his Home Rule creed. Mr. Asquith possesses great abilities, and is a forcible and eloquent speaker, but these gifts would not have introduced him into Mr. Gladstone's Cabinet had he not with enthusiasm attached himself to the party of Home Rule. And a very similar observation might be made with regard to every man on the Front Opposition Bench in either House of Parliament. With a Home Rule policy, Lord Rosebery has lately told us at Liverpool, he will have nothing to do. We are delighted to hear it. But to destroy the foundation on which a building rests is not to reconstruct the edifice, though it may be a necessary preliminary to undertaking an entirely new work.

What as to this, and as to other less important though grave matters, has the Liberal party to say to Lord Rosebery? The views of the chief men in the party in either House are known to the public. In the heyday of its prosperity the party could hardly have afforded to lose men of such distinction as Mr. Morley, Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Bryce. Could it afford to part with them, and with the many who would follow them, now? One can only wonder, if Lord Rosebery were to attempt to lead the Liberal Party in opposition on the lines of his most recent speeches and letters, who

would follow him. But he tells us that he has no aspirations of this kind. 'I have no designs on the leadership of the 'Liberal Party. I have no personal ambition or object in 'view.*' The facts and conditions of the time, which Lord Rosebery himself evidently understands much better than do some of his partisans, in truth make a reconstruction of the Liberal Party under his leadership entirely impossible.

There is some reason to doubt whether those who have lately been known as 'Liberal Imperialists' realise all this as clearly as does Lord Rosebery himself. A reconstructed Liberalism would appear to be the object at which Mr. Asquith, Mr. Haldane, Sir Edward Grey, Sir Henry Fowler, and others are aiming. But then their abandonment of Home Rule, if they have abandoned it, is far less unequivocal than Lord Rosebery's. There has been far less indication on their part that they wish for a permanent breach with Irish Nationalists, still less with British Radicalism—English, Scotch, or Welsh. This is not a time for pressing forward Home Rule, they think. For the present the electorate is against them, and they are ready to let it stand over for a more favourable opportunity. They are, however, in no degree prepared, so far as we have seen, to assert and maintain the Unionist principle as an essential article of the Liberal faith. They are certainly no longer ardent Home Rulers in the old sense, but they have not yet abandoned the hope of a reconstructed Liberalism embracing all sections of the party, Moderate and Radical, in which some modifications of Irish local administration should take the place of Gladstonian Home Rule, and in which their 'Imperialistic' sentiments should have greater weight than at present. A final rupture of the party *may* supervene, and then they will take their line, but we greatly doubt whether any appreciable number of them wish to bring it about. In the party sense, unless we are mistaken, they are still 'good Liberals,' however much they may think that the old 'instrument' needs refurbishing. Whilst, therefore, Lord Rosebery appears to be looking to new political combinations and the complete abandonment of Home Rule, his lieutenants seem to aim rather at the mitigation and healing of differences within the Liberal Party, so as to enable it to rise again with renewed strength in order to dismiss the Unionists from power, and to guide the nation once more along the paths of the later Gladstonian statesmanship.

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* Speech at Glasgow.

If Lord Rosebery is right in thinking that the Liberal Party, as such, is too much demoralised—too much torn asunder by internal dissensions—to regain the confidence of the nation, what is the political combination which he has in view to succeed to the present Government whose inefficiency, we gather from his speeches, ought to bring about its immediate removal from office? Doubtless, if it were generally recognised that the Government policy of conquering the Dutch Republics in South Africa had broken down in disaster, the Government itself could not stand. The majority in the House of Commons, reflecting the general sentiment of the people, would fall off, and the Ministry would very soon find itself in a minority. But it is absurd to pretend that because Government agents have been cheated in the matter of horse-supply and meat contracts, anything like a general breakdown has taken place. In operations on so gigantic a scale a Government and its agents must make some blunders, and must often be imposed upon. In every great war in the past contractors have found their opportunity in making money out of the pressing needs of the State. And we shall be greatly surprised if investigation does not show that, on the whole, the administrative business of the war, especially in the supply branches of it, has been far better managed during the present than in previous wars. Before a new political combination can succeed the existing Unionist Government, the latter must be turned out; and how does Lord Rosebery propose to take this necessary preliminary step? Apparently it is expected that dissatisfied Conservatives, independent-minded men in general, and Liberal Unionists almost *en bloc*, will rally to Lord Rosebery's standard. But why should they? Why especially should the Liberal Unionists? Has Liberal Unionism any special doctrine or standard on the subject of efficiency or inefficiency not shared by the rest of the world? Have Liberal Unionists in the Government, such as Mr. Chamberlain and Lord Lansdowne, been less responsible than Conservatives for the whole conduct of the War since it began? Inside or outside the House of Commons has there been any kind of cleavage of view in regard to the question of efficient management of the war between the Conservative and Liberal Unionist parties?

Apart altogether from the war and his doctrine of efficiency, has Lord Rosebery on general grounds any title whatever to ask for the support of Liberal Unionists? He and some of his followers seem to imagine that he has only

to lower his Home Rule colours to induce Liberal Unionists to rally to his standard as that of all true Liberals. But this is to misunderstand the whole course of events for the last fifteen years. Let not Lord Rosebery delude himself in the belief that Liberal Unionism outside the House of Commons is a very different thing from Liberal Unionism within it. In 1886 Liberals who in the past had done much to secure the predominance of that party and to forward its principles took a very serious step indeed, under the pressing necessity of preserving the Parliamentary union of the Three Kingdoms. Adhering to the principles which they and Mr. Gladstone till 1886 had always professed, they formed themselves into a separate party to uphold the principle of the Union with its necessary corollaries—the maintenance of law and order in Ireland, and the preservation of the House of Commons of the United Kingdom against insidious attacks from within. For several years, without themselves taking office, Liberal Unionists maintained in power a Conservative Government which shared these views, and was able to give effect to them. When that Government fell, and a Home Rule Government was placed in office, the alliance between Conservatives and Liberal Unionists became closer than ever in their joint struggle to avert the passing of Mr. Gladstone's insane Home Rule measure of 1893. In 1895 Liberal Unionist leaders most properly took upon themselves the full responsibility for their action in opposition, and the joint Ministry under Lord Salisbury came into being. It is quite true that upon the formation of Lord Salisbury's Cabinet the Parliamentary parties—Liberal Unionist and Conservative—previously in alliance, merged their forces. They had the same 'Whips,' and as a Parliamentary organisation Liberal Unionists ceased henceforth in the House of Commons to have a separate existence. The influence, however, of Liberal Unionists did not cease, though it was exercised perhaps in a somewhat different manner. In the constituencies the change in the situation has been less formal, though not less real in substance. The Liberal Unionist organisations almost everywhere remain. In 1886 and long afterwards Liberal electors had great difficulty in bringing themselves to vote 'with the Tories,' and Liberal Unionist Associations were of the greatest use in strengthening men to vote in accordance with their convictions. But in 1902 much of the old difficulty has passed away, and, in spite of the best efforts of Home Rule Liberals, the word 'Tory' has lost a great deal of its former unpopu-

larity. A new generation has grown up to whom the fight appears to be between Unionists and Home Rulers, and to whom the Liberal split of 1886 is mere matter of history. In the country, as in the House of Commons, the Unionists now stand together virtually as a single party.

This being the course of events during the last few years, Lord Rosebery has now, it seems, come very near to embracing the Unionist faith. As regards Ireland, he said at Liverpool that if the question of Irish Home Rule were the 'only domestic question, it might be possible for Liberal Unionists and Liberal Imperialists to get on together without very much difficulty.' This is satisfactory, for, the Liberal Unionists having in no degree altered their views on Home Rule, it must mean that the Liberal Imperialists are coming to the Unionist way of thinking. But can Lord Rosebery or anyone else really suppose that because he has come or is coming to share the Liberal Unionist view, *therefore* Liberal Unionists should break with the Conservatives and join him? It is evident that it is incumbent upon him, not merely to show his agreement with Liberal Unionists, but also some reason for their disagreement with, and separation from, the Conservatives. He speaks as if this would be found in domestic policy. But what is *his* domestic policy? A clean slate! And who can agree or differ with a clean slate?

To sum up. Lord Rosebery declares for 'efficiency.' So do we all. He expresses Unionist opinions. So do Conservatives as well as Liberal Unionists. As regards the war, and the way in which he would hope to terminate it, he seems substantially to agree with Mr. Chamberlain and the Government. All this is intelligible and reasonable, but where we fail to follow him is when he insists that these opinions of his are reasons for breaking up instead of strengthening the Unionist Government and party.

The notion of constructing an Opposition on the basis of substantial agreement with the Ministry on the main question of the day is a singular one. An 'alternative Government' is the expression in general use. It seems in many quarters to be thought advisable that a number of Ministers *in posse* should hold themselves always in readiness to relieve the existing servants of the Crown of their burdens, without causing any changes except in the *personnel* of the Government. It is to be like changing horses in the old coaching days. The tired horses are taken out, a fresh team is put in, and the coach proceeds merrily along the same

road to its destination. It is not in this way hitherto that changes of government have been brought about.

In one condition of affairs only could he expect to see the formation of a 'Government of efficiency' composed of men drawn from all parties without regard to their political principles. In case of failure to carry out the policy of conquering the two Republics the country would assuredly insist on a change of Ministry. It would not tolerate the abandonment of the task it had taken in hand, nor will it, for the matter of that, remain satisfied for an indefinite period in pouring troops by the hundred thousand into Africa, and in spending hundreds of millions, without bringing the war to a triumphant conclusion. In the opinion of the general public, as usual underrating the magnitude of the task upon which the nation has been bent, the war has lasted far too long already; and very considerable dissatisfaction with the Government, rightly or wrongly, will be manifested if it lasts much longer. Fortunately, however, there is at last strong reason for believing that the Boer armed resistance is drawing to an end. The difficulties that remain are still very great, and are not as yet appreciated by the public at home. But one thing is universally recognised, viz. that we cannot really begin to grapple with these till peace has been re-established.

Short of failure in the object of the war, or indefinite delay in its accomplishment, there appears to us to be no chance whatever of a combination of parties being formed strong enough to turn out the present Government and to take its place. At present the Unionist ranks are entirely unbroken. The war and foreign and colonial questions occupy men's thoughts, largely to the exclusion of domestic politics, and on these absorbing topics many eminent Liberals habitually hold language which is hardly to be distinguished from that of his Majesty's Ministers. The policy of the war from the beginning has had their hearty support. They do not grudge the gigantic expenditure that it has entailed, and they do not, like other and more strenuous opponents of the Government, pass any criticisms on the arbitrary methods and the complete suspension of the liberties of our fellow-subjects which military rule has involved. The natural conclusion to expect from such a condition of things, judging from past experience, is not the breaking away of Unionists from the Government, but rather the still closer and closer approximation of leading Liberals to a Ministry with which they are so largely in sympathy.

It is vain for Lord Rosebery to ask what has this Government done. Unionists remember that by its means alone that fatal policy which Lord Rosebery has now wisely abandoned has been averted. Had he and his friends had their way, Ireland during these years of war would have been governed 'as a nation' by Messrs. Redmond, Dillon, and a Nationalist Parliament in Dublin! Do Liberal Imperialists think that that would have facilitated the conquest of South Africa? The fact is that when Liberals abandon Home Rule, and vigorously support the policy of the war, they for the time being cease altogether to be opponents of his Majesty's Government in the ordinary party sense of the word. In our history the effect of a war has often been to reduce almost to vanishing point the forces of the Parliamentary Opposition. The Government and the party of the Government identify themselves with the nation; and those who condemn and criticise their policy are themselves accused of sympathy with their country's foes. This silencing of effective criticism in times of popular excitement by the passionate sentiment of the day has often had unhappy consequences in this and other countries; and statesmen have too often found themselves cheered on in courses which a calmer judging posterity unhesitatingly condemns. The intolerance of a majority before now has but served to increase the violence of political reaction.

Only strong convictions and great courage can render an Opposition statesman, in times like these, strong enough to withstand the stream and to keep his feet. Whatever the political leanings of Englishmen may be, it is impossible for them not to admire the steadfastness with which Mr. John Morley upholds the flag of latter-day Gladstonian Liberalism. His ideals are always high ones, and he is able to clothe great thoughts in noble language. He condemns the war from the beginning. Even as late as the Bloemfontein Conference he believes that patience and wisdom and the power of grasping truly the full bearings of the South African question would have preserved the peace. He reminded his audience at Manchester of his speech to them in September, 1899. The moderating language he then thought it right to use, and his warnings as to the immeasurable evils which a war of races was certain to bring upon South Africa, fell upon deaf ears. In the late autumn of that unhappy year men did not see the circumstances and conditions of the South African problem in true perspective—with the sense of proportion between present

mischiefs and proposed remedies—with which, undoubtedly, history will regard it. The great cause of trouble in South African politics is racial jealousy, which wise and prudent men of both races had done much to abate, but which, of course, could not but be intensified a hundredfold by a war absolutely certain to develop the hostility between Englishmen and Dutchmen throughout the length and breadth of British South Africa. In Mr. Morley's view, as in that of the Liberal Imperialists and Lord Rosebery, there has been a lamentable want of 'efficiency' on the part of the Government; but in his opinion the inefficiency has been that of statesmen and politicians, whilst according to Lord Rosebery and his friends the only inefficiency has been in the departmental muddling and blundering in the carrying out of a policy at once wise and patriotic. The war having commenced, Mr. John Morley, we gather from his speeches, has always agreed with the immense majority of Liberal Imperialists, Liberal Unionists, and Conservatives in thinking that an end could not be found to it with safety by any measure less than the annexation of the two republics to the British Empire. Indeed, it was largely because an end, in his opinion so undesirable, seemed to be the inevitable consequence of such a war that he pressed upon his countrymen its extreme impolicy, till every effort to avert it had been tried in vain.

The Liberal Imperialists, in endeavouring to concentrate the whole strength of the Opposition on the alleged inefficiency of the Government in carrying on the war, are making the same mistake which the Government and the public made almost universally at its commencement. They still, after the event, grossly underestimate the difficulty of the task presented by the conquest of the two Dutch States; and they speak as if this detail or that detail, differently managed, would have made the whole difference! For our part we doubt whether there was ever a British ministry in power which would have wrestled more vigorously and on the whole more successfully with the gigantic enterprise gradually disclosed to them. That they ought to have realised what such a war involved before it was entered upon is beyond dispute. Their information from South Africa must have been very faulty, and they failed to appreciate the main factor in the war—the intense love of country and the fighting capacity of our foes. But had all this been understood in September, 1899, as it is understood by everyone to-day, unless, indeed, the knowledge had served to keep the

peace, how would it have helped us? Would the country or Parliament have made preparations to send a quarter of a million troops to South Africa? And would the Boers have waited till this great force was ready to advance for their conquest? As it was, the calling out of 80,000 reserves and the embarkation of a few thousand troops for South Africa at once produced the ultimatum. In no way whatever could the conquest of such a people in such a country prove to be anything but a gigantic task, involving years of warfare, tens of thousands of lives, and hundreds of millions of money. It would not have been any easier for Liberal Imperialists than for other men. Having regard to the extent of the military preparedness of the nation before the war, for which our statesmen and Parliament, rather than the War Office, were responsible, Lord Lansdowne and Mr. Brodrick deserve credit for having achieved very remarkable results. Departmentally there has been no breakdown, there has been no disaster. Let men turn to the accounts of the first year of the Crimean War to learn what mismanagement means and what disasters may result from it. We have advanced since those days, but there is still great need of improvement. A far more powerful army than has been deemed necessary in the past will now be required. It is not so much that the old system has broken down as that new exigencies have arisen which must be met with a far vaster preparation.

There would be no reason why those who share Mr. Morley's views as to the policy of the war should not when it is over act cordially with Liberal Imperialists, so far as South Africa is concerned, in opposition to the present Government. But, unfortunately for the unity of the Liberal party, there is a more abiding cause of difference between the two sections than the views they take of events in Africa nearly three years ago. Mr. Morley, with the full force of strenuous conviction, still declares for Home Rule, and it cannot be doubted that there are still a considerable number of English Liberals who adhere to the Gladstonian faith. Home Rule can never take a second place in the programme of a party. If it is to be found there at all, it must dwarf everything else and constitute the foundation policy of the statesmen who support it. If the latter get a majority in the constituencies, they will before everything else set themselves to form a Home Rule ministry. It cannot, in the nature of things, be left an open question as to which different ministers may hold different views. Mr. Morley's strong sense of conviction and his determined

consistency are to be admired in times when political principles are lightly embraced and as lightly discarded. Nevertheless, it is difficult to understand how any experienced statesman can still hold that the solution of our difficulties with Ireland is to be found in establishing an Irish nation, in the political sense of the word, with more or less abridged rights of nationhood. It is easy to find fault with 'Castle government,' against which no doubt much useful criticism may be directed, and in which many useful reforms may be introduced. There may be hereafter much useful devolution by the Imperial Parliament to local authorities. But the real question is towards which ideal are we to work—the ideal of a single 'nation,' composed of Englishmen, Scotchmen, and Irishmen, with a common national government, or the particularist ideal of different nations, combining, if possible, for certain general purposes? Mr. Morley's love of peace is genuine and deep, but we cannot doubt that the policy he so vehemently urges would, if it could be carried out, lead us to the very verge, and probably beyond it, of civil war. Should, then, peace in South Africa be re-established, and domestic politics again resume their prominence in the rivalry of parties, the great question of Home Rule will still remain, not to rally Liberals to a combined attack upon the Unionist position, but once more to divide them by a fresh cleavage. Mr. Gladstone has bequeathed to his successors a fatal heritage. His powerful personality gave to a policy never really popular in Great Britain a support it would never have won upon its own merits or under other patronage. And now that he has gone, his policy remains as the great stumbling-block in the way of hearty co-operation amongst his old followers.

Whilst there is little sign that the return of Lord Rosebery to active politics will reinvigorate the old Liberal Party it would be unjust to him to deny that his renewed intervention in the public affairs of the State is of considerable moment. Though not, perhaps, to his party, his patriotism (and not for the first time) has been of real service to his country. When, a few years ago, he retired from the Liberal leadership his action was sufficient to defeat the dangerous and useless foreign policy upon which the hot-headed and ignorant mass of his party seemed bent. At the present moment no one can bring to bear an influence equal to his to draw back his old friends from the pursuit of the *ignis fatuus* of Home Rule. In the great stress of the South African war no one has done more than Lord

Rosebery to prevent the political criticisms of the Opposition from assuming a proportion and a direction which would have assisted our country's foes. He possesses in a very rare degree the ear of his own countrymen, and his reputation stands second to that of Lord Salisbury alone with the statesmen of the Continent. Lord Rosebery, in or out of office, cannot but wield great influence if he chooses to do so. To us at least it seems that for some time to come his importance and influence will depend upon his detachment from intimate connexion with either of the great political parties. His political principles make it impossible for him to identify himself with the Opposition; his past makes it equally impossible for him to join a Unionist Administration. The times are not such as to call for a coalition—a coalition against whom? If a new party is to be constructed it must be out of the fragments of the old ones, and the Unionist Party is entirely unbroken. But in order to render good service to the State it is fortunately not necessary for an English statesman to be a minister of the Crown or the slave of a party. Lord Rosebery doubtless values the independence of his position, and wide and deep changes must occur in the political conditions before, if he is a wise man, he will be tempted to leave it.

In the present Session the Government has laid before Parliament a very considerable programme of domestic legislation; the procedure of the House of Commons is being overhauled; the Budget and the military and naval proposals of the Ministry are of the greatest importance. In past days ample opportunity would have been found by statesmen in Opposition to consolidate their party in an attack upon some, at least, of the proposals of the Government. As yet, however, there is no sign of renewed energy or of hearty co-operation amongst Liberals, nor evidence that they are beginning to win back the confidence of the country lost to them by the events of 1886 and 1893. The Unionist Government has fallen upon troubled times, but the people as a whole show no inclination whatever to withdraw their support; for none of the leaders of the Opposition, official or otherwise, seems able to persuade them that the interests of the country can be safely entrusted to the groups of politicians who arrogate to themselves the name of the Liberal Party.

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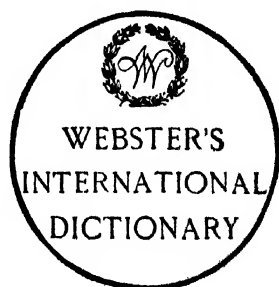
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